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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-034 *20 February 1991*

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Inter-Arab Affairs

AMU Foreign Ministers Hold 'Emergency Meeting'

LD1902225191 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The foreign ministers of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] will hold an emergency meeting tomorrow in the city of Banghazi at the request of the Great Jamahiriyah, which is chairing the current session of the AMU Presidential Council. The ministers will focus on studying the overall structure of the AMU; supporting the Gulf peace initiatives; and discussing the implications of the finances and assistance being received by the Zionist entity through its exploitation of the Gulf war developments. The ministers will also study a number of other subjects of common interest.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Delegation in Moscow Meets With Iraqis

LD1902200391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] A Palestinian delegation in Moscow, under the leadership of Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] and including delegation member brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, has held consultations with the Iraqi delegation, headed by Sa'dun Hammadi, and with the Soviet foreign minister.

Talks' Purpose Viewed

LD1902175291 Algiers Domestic Service in French 1200 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The PLO is following the evolution of the situation: A PLO delegation attended yesterday's Moscow Iraqi-Soviet talks. This news was carried exclusively yesterday evening by Channel 3 [Algiers radio]. Our colleague Djahida Mihoubi met Bassam Abu-Sharif in Tunis.

[Begin Bassam Abu-Sharif] Right now there is a Palestinian delegation in Moscow, led by Abu-Mazin. The delegation went to Moscow to meet with the Soviet foreign minister because the PLO is very anxious about the continuity of endeavors aimed at reaching a political solution for a cease-fire in the Gulf. We are still coordinating and cooperating with Iraq to reach a cease-fire [word indistinct] and to find a political solution.

The United States, which wages this catastrophic war in the Gulf, has attempted and is still trying to kill all political endeavors in an attempt to thwart a political solution. We hope that the Soviet Union can change the attitude vis-a-vis the catastrophe and the crime against Iraq. [end recording]

Jordanian Paper Interviews 'Arafat on Gulf War

NC1702201091 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 17 Feb 91 P 12

["Text" of interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by SAWT AL-SHA'B correspondent Sa'd al-Silawi in Baghdad; date not given]

[Text][al-Silawi] Mr. President, how do you assess Iraq's steadfastness and the situation in Iraq in general?

['Arafat] The days through which Baghdad is passing are our nation's days of glory, pride, and steadfastness. We said right from the start that the dimensions of the plot have been exposed; it is not what they said it was, it is not for the implementation of the UN resolutions. In effect, they are doing what Thatcher said before she disappeared from the political scene and what was later said by Bush and the U.S. and European political and military command.

The aggression seeks to destroy the Iraqi force because it represents the real Arab power. Therefore, this battle is not Iraq's battle alone. It is the battle of Palestine, the battle of Arab and Islamic nations, and the battle of Third World nations and all the world's free and honorable men, who are confronting the treacherous force which is attempting to impose its new order on the Third World, of which we are a part. It is a new Sykes-Picot agreement which also affects us. It is the map of Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates, part of which was represented in the agreement reached in Malta when the door was opened to the immigration of 3 million Soviet Jews to the occupied territories.

What is now happenning in Iraq is a chapter in the glorious history of the Arabs. It reminds us of the early days of the companions of the messenger of God and Muslims who rose up against oppression and aggression and confronted the greatest powers that existed at the time—the Roman and Persian Empires. And what was the result? The faithful triumphed then, as they are now.

[Al-Silawi] In view of the cover the United Nations gave to the aggression and its negligence toward the Palestinian issue resulting from its failure to implement the UN resolutions concerning the Palestinian people, do you, Mr. President, still have faith in this international body which is completely submissive to the United States?

['Arafat] We cannot say that we have lost hope or that we will withdraw from the United Nations. When we lose hope we will withdraw. Currently, there is a grinding battle represented in the U.S. attempts which seek to transform the United Nations into a new league of nations through which they will carve out spheres of influence around the world. It is, as I said, a new Sykes-Picot and a new Yalta. This answer is not just addressed to the Arab nation; it is rather addressed to all free and honorable men and all Third World countries. It is also addressed to the leaders and people of the Arab

countries. The real battle is over whether we can survive as an Arab and Islamic nation and as part of the Third World. The mother of battles is being waged for the sake of the mother of issues.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. President, the Zionist occupation authorities are waging a war of starvation against the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. Have you any message for the heroic people of the intifadah?

['Arafat] First of all, it is the same battle. It is the mother of battles for the sake of the mother of causes—Palestine. What is happening to our people is unprecendented in the history of mankind. The occupation authorities imposed a curfew on a whole people for a month. They lifted the curfew for few hours and then reimposed it after new operations were carried out inside the occupied territory against the occupying enemy and the spiteful Zionists. After the massacre in the al-'Amiriyah shelter in Baghdad, the enemy authorities reimposed the curfew and prevented farmers from going to their fields and from marketing or exporting their crops. It is a starvation operation designed to strike at the economic infrastructure which we have been able to build during crises and blockades and during the other battles we waged. Nevertheless, I tell my kinsfolk and brothers: Be patient, you have a date with paradise and victory. Our Palestinian people, thanks be to God, are a good-natured people. Look at this wonderful steadfastness in the hungry camps, which are resisting with courage. Look at these people who have lost 90 percent of their income as a result of the Gulf war, because of the interruption in remittances and the disruption of business, in addition to the hardships experienced by workers who have been prevented from going to their jobs. Despite all this, our people hold their heads high and are full of pride, dignity, and faith. Therefore, I say that a people with such nobility will inevitably triumph, sooner or later.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. President, Palestinian rockets have been fired from southern Lebanon simultaneously with the Iraqi al-Husayn missiles. However, the Lebanese Army has deployed, apparently to prevent Palestinian attacks. What is your comment?

['Arafat] Yes, the Lebanese Army has deployed. There are attempts to drive a wedge between us and the Lebanese Army, but we will not fall into this trap. We can have an understanding with the Lebanese Army, but at the same time we insist on carrying out our duty on this front where fighting has not stopped for one moment since 1981.

Since 1966 [as published] Israel has been virtually unable to retaliate, as it has been unable to retaliate against the al-Husayn missiles. Therefore, it has launched cowardly attacks on the Palestinian camps in Lebanon—al-Rashidiyah, 'Ayn al-Hulwah, al-Miyah Wa Miyah, al-Burj al-Shamali—and Lebanese villages. These are being bombarded daily from the air, land, and sea. However, as I said, we are in the same trench with the Iraqi people and are doing what our conscience requires us to do, be it in the occupied territory, in southern Lebanon, or in any other area. The UN political moves and the efforts we are exerting in conjunction with the Arab and Islamic states, the Third World states, and the nonaligned states is only part of our duty which we are carrying out on all levels. We will not stop.

[Al-Silawi] Mr. President, as the war continues and expands, do you expect that it will come to engulf other Arab states?

['Arafat] Yes, and this is what the United States fears most. The United States is worried that the war may expand. If the war continues at its present pace, it will expand whether the United States and its allies like it or not. It will expand on the Arab and Islamic levels and on the Middle East level, and its effects will be felt everywhere around the world without exception.

[Al-Silawi] Popular circles are speaking of the required minimum level from states advocating an Arab solution regarding the Security Council decisions and the economic blockade. What is your opinion?

['Arafat] We must understand that all these resolutions were adopted as a result of U.S. pressure and should be viewed from this angle. It is true that international detente was reached in Paris through a joint declaration on ending the cold war. However, they must understand that as an Arab nation and Third World people, we will not accept that their detente comes at our expense. They reached this detente to divide the spoils of the Third World. This is unacceptable, at least to us, the Arab nation. We reject it vehemently. Iraq today represents this Arab greatness and rejection and its sons and people are being killed and its economic infrastructure, its educational and medical institutions, and its factories, even those producing infant formula, are being destroyed for the sake of the Arab nation. The forces of evil continue their destruction, and Iraq is paying a high price on behalf of the Arab nation. Iraq's steadfastness is not only in defense of Iraq; Saddam Husayn is not only defending the Iraqi people. He is defending the Arab people and the Arab nation's honor. This means that we, as part of the Arab nation, cannot be satisfied with verbal protests.

National Council Official Arrives in Rabat

LD1402222391 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 14 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Salim Za'nun, deputy speaker of the Palestinian National Council, arrived in Morocco today on an official visit, during which he will hold several meetings at the House of Representatives. Regarding the significance of this Palestinian move, Mr. Za'nun, who was met at the Mohammed V airport by the second deputy speaker of the House of Representatives and the ambassador of the state of Palestine in Rabat, had this to say:

[Begin Za'dun recording] This move by the Palestinian National Council falls within the framework of coordination with the brothers in the Moroccan parliament, with a view to ensuring the success of the forthcoming meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union which is due to be held in the second half of this month in sister Algeria. It has been our custom to maintain coordination between us and our brothers in the Moroccan parliament in order to ensure the success of this meeting, particularly in these difficult circumstances. [end recording]

OPEC Affairs

Reported Algerian Bid for OPEC Meeting Denied

Invitation Gets 'Lukewarm Reception'

NC1802104191 Paris AFP in English 1022 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Nicosia, Feb 18 (AFP)—Algeria has invited all oil ministers from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) for talks in Vienna later this month, but the overture got a lukewarm reception from Gulf producers, the Middle East Economic Survey [MEES] reported here Monday.

It said Algerian Minister of Mines and Industry Sadek Boussena, current president of the OPEC conference, circulated a proposal for "informal consultations" in Vienna on February 25.

The purpose of the proposed gathering was not clear, beyond "a general discussion of the present oil market situation", according to MEES.

But the Nicosia-based newsletter said the suggestion received "a decidedly cool reception from the Gulf producers of the Arabian peninsula, whose oil ministers are unlikely to attend the meeting".

Gulf ministers see the gathering as ill-timed in light of the war in the region and are not convinced that the session is necessary when an OPEC ministerial meeting is already scheduled for March 11.

In addition, according to MEES, Gulf producers believe there is no urgency for a meeting "in market terms, when prices, though well down on the pre-January 17 highs (the date the Gulf war erupted), are nevertheless still in the area of the OPEC target level".

Algeria, while rejecting the August 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, has nonetheless shown some sympathy for Iraq—unlike Gulf states—in its military standoff with the West.

Boussena: No Meeting Was Planned

AU1802190591 Paris AFP in English 1723 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Paris, Feb 18 (AFP) — No "formal or informal" meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was planned in Vienna next week, Algerian Minister of Mines and Industry Sadek Boussena said Monday [18 February].

Mr. Boussena is current OPEC chairman.

In a statement released by OPECNA, the OPEC news agency, Mr. Boussena confirmed that a ministerial meeting of the organization's market watchdog committee would go ahead as planned on March 11 in Vienna.

This meeting had been scheduled during the OPEC ministerial meeting last December, it said.

The statement followed a report earlier Monday that Mr. Boussena had invited all OPEC oil ministers for "informal consultations" in Vienna on February 25 for a "general discussion of the present oil market situation." [passage omitted]

Algeria

Spain's Fernandez-Ordonez Arrives for Talks

Greeted by Ghozali at Airport

LD1602164491 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] The Spanish foreign minister arrived today in Algeria on an official visit. Mr. Fernandez-Ordonez's visit comes within the context of a tour which will take him to the AMU [Arab Mahgreb Union] capitals.

The Spanish official was received by Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghozali. The head of Spanish diplomacy is expected to be received soon by President Chadli Bendjedid.

In a statement at the airport, the Spanish official pointed out that his talks in Algeria will especially include bilateral relations and the situation in the Gulf.

The Algerian foreign minister, in a statement at the airport, said that the anti-Iraqi coalition members should make a positive response to the Iraqi initiative, which specified a conditional withdrawal from Kuwait, if the aim of the war in the region is to implement the UN resolutions.

On the other hand, Mr. Ghozali stated that if the coalition countries reject the Iraqi proposals, then this would mean that the war has another aim which is the destruction of Iraq.

Urges Safety for Spanish Residents

PA1602170991 Madrid TVE-1 Television Network in Spanish 1411 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez has stated that Saddam Husayn's conditions for withdrawal from Kuwait are a winner's demands. Fernandez-Ordonez made these statements upon arriving in Algiers, as part of his tour of the Maghreb countries to explain Spain's position regarding the Persian Gulf war. The foreign minister has asked the Algerian authorities to ensure the security of Spanish citizens living in that country. The request was made after a group of demonstrators attacked the Iberian Airline headquarters in Algiers on 15 February.

Ferandez-Ordonez continues his North African tour. He has stopped to visit Algiers, which is a country where the people very much support the Iraqi regime. However, the people's animosity toward the Western world should not hide the fact that Algiers looks to the Mediterranean and to Europe and is a country with many commercial ties with Spain. The Spanish Government has wanted to clearly express its full support for this country during these difficult times. Algiers is experiencing a crisis, not only because of the war in the Persian Gulf, but because of the difficulties that have stemmed from its recently inaugurated democracy and its painful transition to a market economy.

Although Algeria and Morocco have differing positions on the crisis, the relations of both countries with Spain are vital for geographic and immigration reasons. Currently, both countries have significant commercial relations and a financial agreement that grants them $380 million in loans each year until the end of 1991. The important gas pipeline program, which is to join the two main Maghreb countries to the European gas network, is about to be concluded and will have a great impact on the overall Spanish power policy. This cooperation will be furthered by Felipe Gonzalez during a visit to Algiers, which has been postponed until a more propitious moment to promote bilateral relations.

The minister has also requested that the Algerian authorities explain the events surrounding the 15 February demonstrations and to guarantee that Spanish citizens will be secure.

[Begin Fernandez-Ordonez recording, in progress] ...considering that they were inevitable actions by people on the streets who were overwhelmed with great passion and [word indistinct] it is natural for us to ask the Algerian Government to strengthen measures to ensure the security of people who live here—including our citizens—and our interests which are very important.... [end recording]

Fernandez-Ordonez reaffirmed the Spanish Government's position on the proposal to negotiate presented by the Iraqi Revolutionary Council.

[Begin Fernandez-Ordonez recording, in progress] ...contrary to Resolution 660, they impose, they demand conditions. These demands are appropriate for a winner. The proposal is probably too late and too little if what they really want is to stop the war. However, I would not be—because I never am—totally negative until we see how events evolve. [end recording]

Discusses Gulf With Ghozali

LD1602184591 Madrid in Spanish to Europe 1500 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] At midday today Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez arrived in Algiers to tour the Maghreb countries in order to explain Spain's stance on the Gulf war. Fernandez-Ordonez had a first meeting with his Algerian counterpart, in which they both outlined their positions. While Ghozali expressed his confidence that the Iraqi proposal represents a way out of the conflict, Fernandez-Ordonez believes that Baghdad's offer is contrary to UN Resolution 660, which speaks of an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

Nevertheless, the Spanish foreign minister said that the different positions on the conflict are held within the most scrupulous mutual respect. This evening the two countries' foreign ministers will resume their contacts, and the Spanish foreign minister is expected to have a meeting with the president of Algeria, Chadli Bendjedid, on the peace plans for the Gulf, European financial aid

for Algeria, and the development of talks on security between the Maghreb and the countries of southern Europe.

Closer Ties Sought

LD1602202191 Madrid Domestic Service in Spanish 1900 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] The Spanish Administration continues to try to forge closer ties with the Maghreb. Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez-Ordonez is now in Algeria with the intention of safeguarding Spanish interests in the region. A few minutes ago Fernandez-Ordonez met with Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Ghozali—a report on this from our special correspondent in Algiers Rosa Jimenez:

[Jimenez] In spite of the different positions they hold on the conflict, Spain and Algeria worked together to prevent the war and are now doing so to stop it—this was said by Fernandez-Ordonez at the end of the meeting lasting almost two hours with his Algerian opposite number, Ghozali, a meeting which officially concludes the talks held in this country by the Spanish foreign minister. In his talks with both President Benu, did and Foreign Minister Ghozali, he discussed bilateral issues, in which the two sides expressed the utmost interest, and, inevitably, the Gulf war, in spite of the opposing positions held by Spain and Algeria, the two countries are hoping that the diplomatic actions now being discussed will lead to a ceasefire. At a brief meeting with journalists, the Algerian foreign minister played down the picture being presented of his country abroad and made the following observation:

[Begin Ghozali recording, in French with superimposed Spanish translation] We are convinced that this war will consolidate the democratic process in Algeria. The demonstrations which are taking place freely will produce greater national cohesion in tackling the future. [end recording]

[Jimenez] We also asked the Spanish foreign minister about this situation and about the consequences it may have for Spaniards and their interests. According to Fernandez-Ordonez, Algeria is in a phase of democratic transformation, and our bilateral relations will have to adapt to this new situation:

[Begin Fernandez-Ordonez recording] Algeria is a country which is changing. Its society is becoming more plural and diverse. The country will be more plural and diverse. The country will be more plural and more diverse, and we must establish relations which keeping with this new Algeria which is in the process of transformation. In this respect, what it has said on this occasion is a message of calmness, as you have seen, for Spanish businessmen, for Spanish investors, for Spanish public opinion, in the sense that Algeria is a country which, as President Chadli said to me today, wants very much to work with Spain and is very interested in relations with Spain, and it is very important to them to convey this message. [end recording]

FLN Urges Review of Ties With Anti-Iraq States

LD1902232391 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The Central Committee of the National Liberation Front [FLN] has issued a statement at the conclusion of its ordinary session, which began last Saturday at the Palace of Nations. The statement said, in particular:

After broadly studying and discussing the development of the situation in the Gulf region, the FLN Central Committee, which is meeting in ordinary session, recalls the contents of the resolution issued by the extraordinary session held on 29 January 1991, which was devoted to studying the situation resulting from the war that has been declared against the fraternal Iraqi people.

In the face of the escalation of the aggressive, unjust, and treacherous war which is being waged by the opposing coalition forces under the leadership of the United States and the regimes that are collaborating with it, this war, the nature of which was clear to world opinion from the first moment, especially after the brutal massacres which resulted in tens of thousands of innocents, including the elderly, women and children; and in the face of the frightening destruction which has afflicted economic, social, cultural, historical, and civilized achievements; the FLN Central Committee lauds the courageous peace initiative which was announced by the Iraqi leadership last Friday. The contents of this initiative express, in firm sincerity, the aspirations and expectations of the Arab and Islamic peoples who have been dismembered by world imperialism. The FLN Central Committee calls upon justice- and peace-loving states in the world, especially the states belonging to the Security Council, to exert every effort to take the Iraqi initiative into consideration, in the service of world peace and security, by stopping the war and immediately opening serious negotiations between the relevant parties to solve all the Middle East region's problems, foremost the Palestinian issue.

In its statement, the Central Committee condemned the rejectionist position adopted by the United States and its tails toward this initiative, which could bring back peace and security to all the countries of the region. The Central Committee urges the Algerian people and its institutions to continue its material and moral support to the fraternal Iraqi people and, at the same time, to be cautious and vigilant vis-a-vis the dangers facing the Arab and Muslim peoples.

The Central Committee considered the presence of foreign forces in the holy lands and its dangerous results as an obstacle to the performance of the rituals of the greater and lesser pilgrimages. Consequently, it calls upon the Algerian people to refrain from performing the duty of hajj this year because of the unavailability of the right conditions and in protest at the desecration of the Arabian Peninsula, including the two holy mosques.

The Central Committee also calls for a reconsideration of the nature of relations with the aggressor states and the regimes collaborating with them.

Socialist Front Leader Urges Gulf Cease-Fire

LD1502193991 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] The Socialist Forces Front [FFS] organized a rally at El Harcha Hall [Algiers] this afternoon which is an extension of the large-scale protest action in Algeria condemning the massacre carried out by the air force of the anti-Iraq military coalition against innocent civilians in Baghdad. The official in charge of the party, Hocine Ait Ahmed, took this opportunity to call for the establishment of a truce. Here follow his remarks to Messaoud Ramdani.

[Begin Ait Ahmed recording] This is an opportunity for us to reiterate our solidarity with the Iraqi people as well as with the Palestinian people. We repeat our condemnation of the savage acts perpetrated by the allied forces, condemning this mass killing in a bid to eliminate the military and economic forces of Iraq. However, this is not the first day of our solidarity. We have held this position right from the beginning of the crisis and we have attempted to help regarding the cease-fire and highlight the Palestinian cause. We met today, however, to inform our militant sympathizers about developments in a calm but also enthusiastic manner. As far as a truce is concerned we consider it to be necessary because the ordeal of the Iraqi people is considerable and a truce might enable the Arab governments to endeavor to find an Arab solution. [end recording]

Egypt

Butrus Ghali Views Nonaligned Gulf Initiative

PM1902154091 Paris LIBERATION in French 14 Feb 91 p 8

[Interview with Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butrus Ghali by Pierre Haski in Belgrade—date not given]

[Excerpts] Belgrade—"We do not have a magic formula," Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Loncar admitted after the meeting of the 16 nonaligned countries in Belgrade. Nonetheless the ministers formed a mission to Baghdad yesterday which will include the movement's Yugoslav chairman, in addition to Algeria and Iran. Tehran has announced that it is sending its own delegation to Baghdad in the next few days. [passage omitted]

Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs in Egypt, a member of the coalition, assessed this Belgrade meeting.

[Haski] What purpose will this mission to Baghdad serve?

[Ghali] The goal of this meeting was consideration and consultation to decide what to do. Among the ideas discussed was this idea of sending missions. But they can only be sent if the protagonists agree. We are therefore only at the beginning of diplomatic action. The message has not changed: It is obviously implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

[Haski] But this has been said dozens of times.

[Ghali] What makes this action special is that Iraq has always attached great importance to the Nonaligned Movement. I am the first to admit that the chances are limited, but that is no reason not to try.

[Haski] What consensus did you find among the participants from the two camps?

[Ghali] We found a consensus. Everyone said that one of the preconditions is withdrawal from Kuwait. There is complete consensus on that. It was possible that after three weeks there would be some erosion. There was not a single minister who did not emphasize implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

[Haski] Despite that, you were unable to agree on a joint communique.

[Ghali] We did not issue one to avoid having a weak communique and to enable us to find a common denominator. Some of the pro-Iraqis demanded to know whether the Security Council mandate had been exceeded.... There are shades of opinion.

[Haski] You talk of shades of opinion rather than a split.

[Ghali] There is no split. There is consensus on the main objective, be it among the Cubans, the Algerians, or the Palestinians. It is so obvious. Kuwait was a member of our nonaligned organization. It has vanished. How can you defend its disappearance?

[Haski] Iraq is also a member of the Nonaligned Movement.

[Ghali] This is not the first conflict among members of the movement. Our goal is to attempt mediation. A week ago, I attended the presidium of the Socialist International in Vienna. The objective is the same. All these big organizations feel responsible for not having done something to prevent this conflict. Our action is limited, but our inaction would be much more serious.

[Haski] How do you view the postwar situation in the Arab world?

[Ghali] It will be a unique opportunity for the Arab world to create a new impetus in favor of a general awareness and a renewal of Arab solidarity. The postwar period in the Arab world should correspond to the postwar period in Europe which gave rise to the Marshall Plan and the EEC. We have a similar opportunity 50 years later. In addition, in the past 45 years, Europe has never been willing to help the integration of the Arab

world. Now, Europe and the United States realize that it is in their interest to encourage a minimum of solidarity in this Arab world to prevent this Balkanization, these contradictions which weaken this region.

[Haski] Do you agree with Francois Mitterrand when he asks the United Nations to play a predominant role in the postwar period?

[Ghali] This is also the Egyptian position. We have experience of the presence of UN troops. Arab public opinion is prepared to accept them. It will be much more difficult to make him accept the U.S., Soviet, and French forces....

[Haski] After the war, will you press for an international conference on the Near East?

[Ghali] We certainly think that immediately after the war a new peace process must be started, especially on the Palestinian problem. Otherwise those who think there are double standards are proved right. But we are very flexible about whether this process should take the form of an international conference or bilateral contacts.

[Haski] Will the divisions created by this conflict not leave traces?

[Ghali] During the past 45 years, we have had 10 splits and they have always been healed in a few months. Once it is over, there will be reconciliation.

[Haski] What will happen to the PLO?

[Ghali] I was with them yesterday. We may disagree with the policy they have adopted but we maintain excellent relations with them and we are continuing to help them.

[Haski] If Saddam Husayn survives the war as leader of Iraq, is he still a valid interlocutor for you?

[Ghali] We negotiate with whoever is in power. We lived with him when relations were at their most difficult, when he tried to isolate Egypt. But when he was in a corner, we helped him. Your history books call that changes of alliance, but in our view there is no reason why we should not coexist with him in six months time....

Text of Soviet Initiative Not Officially Received

NC2002104791 Cairo MENA in English 1029 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Cairo, Feb, 20—(MENA)—Egypt has not officially received the text of the recent Soviet initiative for solving the Gulf crisis, Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, today said.

Egypt, does welcome any initiative that rests on the resolutions of the Security Council which require the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait, Dr. Ghali added.

Egypt also believes that endeavours should be exerted to evade the war and find out a peaceful settlement for the crisis, he said.

Sidqi Chairs Ministerial Meeting on Gulf War

NC1902144891 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The ministerial group tasked with following up the war to liberate Kuwait resumed its meetings under the chairmanship of Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi this morning to review all aspects of the situation.

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that all the political, military, economic, and security aspects of the situation were discussed during the meeting. He said the ministerial group also reviewed the results of the meetings recently held in Cairo by the foreign ministers of the Gulf countries, Egypt, and Syria and the arrangements pertaining to the holding of the next foreign ministers meeting in Damascus.

He said the conferees also reviewed a working paper connected with the convening of the Islamic countries' foreign ministers meeting in Cairo next Thursday.

They also reviewed the current international initiatives on the Gulf crisis.

Abu-Talib: Troops Not Subjected to 'Animosity'

NC1902210691 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Defense Minister General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib said after his meeting with the commanders, officers, and soldiers of the Armed Forces in Hafar al-Batin in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that the Egyptian forces have performed fully their role in preventing the Iraqi ruler from spreading the hotbed of aggression into Saudi Arabian territory. He said our Armed Forces are defending justice and opposing injustice. Their morale is high because they are implementing pan-Arab duties under directives from President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, the supreme commander of the Armed Forces.

General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib expressed his satisfaction with the excellent condition of the troops in Hafar al-Batin and their high morale and standard of training in their combat duties. Our troops are at the best standard of preparedness. He said the tasks with which President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has entrusted his troops are holy.

He added that our troops are safe and sound and have not been subjected to any animosity. On the contrary, they received large numbers of elements from the other side and handed them over to the Saudis.

The defense minister reaffirmed that our forces are in good shape and awaiting orders from the homeland. They are ready to implement any duty entrusted to them.

General Yusuf Sabri Abu-Talib explained that the objective of his visit was to inspect the Egyptian troops in Hafar al-Batin and to assure himself of their standard, which is very good, thanks be to God, especially the combat units whose duty is to implement any (orders?) issued by the supreme commander of the Armed Forces at any time.

The defense minister praised the role of the Egyptian soldier throughout history and said the Egyptian soldier never saw his role as concerning Egypt alone. His role always extended into the region around him. There are many examples throughout history that prove this point. He said that the role of the Egyptian soldier has always been free of schemes. It has always stemmed from the principles and values Egypt believes in.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Discusses Repercussions of War

NC1902185191 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Report by Faridah al-Shubashi from Tripoli—recorded]

[Text] Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, has given an interview to our radio, which we will broadcast to you later. In the interview he spoke of his assessment of the situation, now that the Gulf war has entered its second month, and of the Arab and international initiatives. He spoke of the war's repercussions on Libya's relations with Egypt and Sudan and its repercussions on inter-Arab relations and the Palestinian issue.

In the interview, President al-Qadhdhafi [title as heard] said that this issue has become complicated and is provoking many serious questions. He said he has several questions about this war and noted that people are now wondering if it is a war to destroy Iraq, to intimidate the Arab nation, or to test modern Western war equipment.

Al-Qadhdhafi expressed doubts about the Arab parties and the seriousness of their commitment to fighting imperialism and Zionism. He added that the victims are the Iraqi and Kuwaiti peoples and he noted that the Iraqi leadership might succeed in reaching an understanding about the war.

President al-Qadhdhafi remarked that the air raids have become more intensive since Iraq submitted its initiative. He said that the Arab nation is barely restraining itself. He added: We are almost certain that the objective of the United States is not to regain Kuwait peacefully. He announced: If it is a matter of revenge and aggression, we might announce, at a moment that has not yet come—and I am personally responsible for this on the pan-Arab level—that the front will extend from the ocean to the Gulf against the United States and its interests. This does not mean at all that I support Kuwait's occupation. However, now that Iraq has shown responsiveness to the withdrawal demand, why is the bombardment continuing and why is it more intensive now? This might cause us to proclaim revolution from the ocean to the Gulf. All the revolutionary forces and the force of the international conference [al-mathabah al-'alamiyah] are waiting for a call from me in this regard. The popular Islamic leadership is also waiting for my call.

Al-Qadhdhafi added: All these forces are exerting continuous pressure on me. However, I wish to give peace a chance. I do not want the world to collapse, because if I announce to the revolutionary Arab and Islamic forces and the force of the international conference that we are entering the battle, it will mean that every continent will become a theater for violence. It has become clear to us that the United States and its allies are conducting an aggression against Iraq and are not fighting to regain Kuwait.

Meets Sudan's Al-Bashir, Chad's Deby

LD1902225991 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Excerpt] The brother leader received this evening Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council in the Sudan, and brother Idriss Mohammad Deby, chairman of the State Council in Chad, in the presence of Col. Abu Bakhr Yunis Jabir, the brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau, and brother 'Ali Sahlul, foreign minister in Sudan.

The brother leader of the revolution and Gen. 'Ummar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council in sister Sudan, and brother Idriss Mohammad Deby, chairman of the state council in Chad, held a closed meeting this evening.

Earlier this evening, Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the RCC in sister Sudan, arrived in the great Jamahiriyah. An official and popular welcome was accorded to Gen. al-Bashir, headed by Col. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi, Deby Give Speeches 18 Feb

LD1902063691 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1655 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Speeches by Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and Chadian President Idriss Deby at a special session of the General People's Congress in Tripoli; Deby speaks in French with passage-by-passage Arabic translation—live]

[Excerpts][al-Qadhdhafi] In the name of God. Brother members of the General People's Congress from the basic people's congresses, the international congresses, and the people's committees. It gives us great pleasure at this special session to welcome our brother and dear

guest Idriss Deby and the high-level delegation which is accompanying him. [applause]

It is fitting for us at this hour to thank God for the great victory of our blood brothers, the Chad revolutionaries, to whom God gave the victory over tyranny, dictatorship, high-handedness, the regime of agentry, backwardness, ignorance, massacres, detested despotism, the disgraceful agentry which handed over this dear African country to imperialism to turn it into a base for aggression against its brothers in order to impair the independence of the African continent and [words indistinct] after the long struggle of this continent for deliverance from colonial domination.

Brothers, we are very happy that our brothers in Chad are breathing the air of freedom after a period in which their breathing was suppressed and in which they were placed in a large prison called Chad. [passage omitted]

The oppression of the Chadian people was carried out with the help, backing, and encouragement of imperialist forces until Chad became during those dark days the poorest country in the world and not only in Africa.

The regime became a source for concern regarding the heart of Africa. It spread instability in Africa. It encouraged arms trading. Armed robbery flourished, armed assassinations emerged, armed gangs that received weapons from the black market in Chad won. Imperialism was encouraging this sad situation, and strived to exhaust the strength of the Chadian people and through it that of Africa.

This fraternal people lived through these years yearning for emancipation. This people made huge sacrifices, it gave martyrs, it was destitute, oppressed, assassinated, destroyed to satisfy the wish of the tyrant [words indistinct].

The Chadian people patiently endured. During all those years they were waiting for the opportunity to swoop on dictatorship, autocracy, and agentry. They were forced to fight their blood brothers and they were forced to bear arms against themselves—a tribe against a tribe. They were forced to live a life of wretchedness and sorrow without anything in return. We knew that this tragedy could not continue.

The April uprising took place under the leadership of Idriss Deby [applause], that gallant uprising expressed the fact that the patience of the Chadian people had run out. It was an expression that tyranny and agentry must be brought to an end at any cost. Idriss Deby gave his dearest friends as a price for that gallant uprising on 1 April. [applause]

The Libyan role was not the decisive one in this battle, but it was the revolutionaries of Chad headed by Idriss Deby. [applause] And in a short time and with a small force the revolution triumphed.

Within a short time and with minimum force the 1 April uprising turned into an armed revolution before which the forces of agentry and dictatorship against the Chadian people swiftly crumbled. This revolution expressed the Chadian people's anger against all the injustices it had endured during those critical years. The Chadian people expressed their utmost wrath against that gang which crumbled within a short time.

Despite the absence of comparison between the rebellious force and that of the agentry, dictatorship, reactionism, and underdevelopment, this small number of elephants triumphed because that revolution was an expression of the will of the Chadian people.

We welcome brother Idriss Deby today. He is not a stranger or a guest here. He is our brother with regard to origin, geography, history, revolution, and the African continent. We share a common history, common destiny, and common struggle. This is his country and he is among his family. His presence here today confirms the real unity existing between this people that stretches from so-called Libya to what is labelled Chad. [crowd chants slogans on unity between Libya and Chad]

It is a matter that underscores the common destiny. It is not merely words. It is a truth written in blood and confirmed by the bodies of human beings across successive stages of history. A matter that underscores the common destiny, I would say, is that the tragedy of the fraternal Chadian people about which I have spoken, was directly reflected on the Libyan people. When the revolution triumphed in Chad and peace emerged, this was also directly reflected on the Libyan people. [passage omitted]

Unity between the two peoples was written in precious blood. The bridge which links the two countries was made of the bodies of the martyrs. This important and bitter experience in the history of the two peoples stressed to us this truth that the destiny of the Libyan and Chadian people is one and that the Libyan and Chadian people are closer than any other [word indistinct]

The harm inflicted either on Chad or Libya is caused by the presence of this harm in this or that country; goodness comes to Chad or Libya because this goodness exists in either country. We advised former Chadian rulers such as [words indistinct] Felix Malome and Habre that harm and goodness would come to them from Libya. If Libya is against you, you will not be spared its harm regardless of any foreign force whose assistance you may seek, because this foreign force comes and leaves; it is not your demographic or geographic partner. As for Libya, it will remain as an (?extension) of Chad until doomsday. [passage omitted]

As for Libya, its situation is different, its [word indistinct] is different, and its position is different as far as Chad is concerned. It has not come here temporarily and will leave afterwards. It looks at Chad as its geographical continuation, as its population continuation, its ethnic, religions, and linguistic coexisting partner. Libya sees fraternal Chad as a neighbor with which it has mutual

influence, it affects it and it is affected by it. Foreign forces do not share these issues with Chad. They look at things from another angle. It is the angle of colonialism and the realisation of imperialist interests. These forces would sacrifice Chad as long as it benefits their colonialist ambitions.

But our brothers in Chad—of the successive governments—were so weak and ignorant that they could not put Chad in the proper place regarding their brothers and neighbors in Libya. Indeed, Chad was used by the anti-Chad and anti-Libya forces—that regrettable use which we all know.

Today, we have the hope that our brothers in Chad have learned a number of lessons from this history. There is no doubt that they sparked off the revolution and paid a dear price for it because they reached the conviction that the Chad situation and the Chad course must be corrected from within and from outside, and that all the hostile, hireling terroristic, reactionary, autocratic, tribal policies were futile as far as the Chadian people were concerned. They reaped nothing except tragedies, destruction, and agony.

During all those painful periods, the Chadian people were not able to cultivate their land or breed their livestock or develop it or build homes or have stability or education or prevent disease or cure disease; they were not able and they did not have the opportunity to plant the land or harvest what they planted if they were able to plant. They did not contemplate manufacturing anything. They lived under the sound of bullets, civil and tribal wars, they lived through troubles, agonies, homelessness, and destruction. Those regimes were an enemy not only to the Libyan people or the Chadian neighbors; they were the enemy in the first place to the Chadian people themselves. They inflicted on them the same destruction which they tried to inflict on Chad's neighbors. All the destruction was inflicted on the Chadian people. The towns of the Chadian people were destroyed. The Chadian people were killed wholesale. The palm forests in Chad were burned and life came to a standstill in Chad for years. Chad was turned into a base for aggression.

The destruction that used to fall on the Chadian people used to make us feel pain. We used to feel pain and we also knew that our fraternal Chadian brothers were not responsible for that. They were placed in front of the turret of the cannon. The cannon must be fired. The guilt (?falls) on the one who fired the cannon and the one who placed the Chadian people at the point of the cannon. Certainly, the one who put the Chadian people at the point of the gun is a criminal and murderer.

A people like the Chadian people, who are the poorest in the world, are closed in; they have no sea outlet. They can hardly form a state at this age from several tribes, different races, and languages. Are the Chadian people in a position which will make them benefit from war, civil war? Are they in need of weapons, desert vehicles, machine guns, bombs? What is the interest of the Chadian people in this stupid and hellish program.

Look at the crime committed against these fraternal people. Of all the peoples, the Chadian people are in dire need of stability and peace to unite these tribes and these languages and races and religions and form a modern state. As for war, civil war, it tears up this unity. This is what happened.

The Chadian people are in dire need of the axe, the plough, so they can plant the soil and have a stable life and do not need the dagger, the bomb, and the Kalashinkov.

Regrettably, at some periods sick and dangerous specimens manage to get hold of the reins of a people to lead them to (?disaster), peril, like what Hitler, Mussolini, Hebri, and others have done. From here, we see that it is a form of gambling to leave the destiny of peoples to the rulers who might be like these specimens. The peoples do not feel assured unless they rule themselves by themselves. [passage omitted]

The Chadian people have seen what all the eras of injustice and dictatorship have done against them. The Chadian people never hated the Libyan people. The Libyan people never hated the Chadian people. The proof of this is that the Chadian people used to flee these dictatorships to their brothers, the Libyan people, at a time when the dictatorships used to harbor animosity toward the Libyan people.

At one time, sections of the Libyan people lived with the Chadian people. Therefore, dictatorship is a common enemy. Power, tyranny, and common enemies of the people. The Chadian people love the Libyan people. They feel that they are their blood brothers and they are an extension of the Chadian people. The Libyan people love the Chadian people, and they have the same feelings toward them.

The cloud of hatred and rancor vanished with the disappearance of autocracy, tribalism, and dictatorship in N'Djamena. The eternal truth remained. The Libyan people do not deny gratitude to the Chadian people when they opened their doors to them, when they were attacked by the Armies of Italy, and when the Italians used the Air Force and the poisonous gas for the first time in the history of the world. The Libyan people found no refuge except on Chadian soil.

Before Tunisia and Egypt, the Libyan people went instinctively to the Chadian territories. Not only during the time of the Italians. [passage omitted]

When France attacked Chad, a single front of Libyans and Chadians was set up. This goes back to 1899, when the first French invasion of Chad took place. Libyans did not say that they were volunteering to fight and were going to a foreign land. They were martyred and died

with conviction on Chadian land. The graves of our forefathers are still there, in every place, in Chad. [passage omitted]

At the outbreak of World War II, the Libyans and Chadians set up one front and joined the Free French Government because it promised independence to Chad. Libyans told their Chadian brothers: The Free French Government set up by de Gaulle has promised you independence, and, therefore, we will join you and fight on your side and the side of Free France to liberate Chad. At the same time, the Chadians in the front with the Libyans told the Libyans: We will fight on your side in the liberation army against the Italians and help the British because the British promised you independence if you help them against the Italians. These are the facts which the lackeys and the ignorant and traitors forgot. [passage omitted]

It is a fact that all blood shed on Chadian soil since the 19th century and until recent years and all the sacrifices were made by the Libyan people for the sake of the Chadian people. In the battles which were hard fought—some of which were won and others lost, and all the losses, victories, tears, sweat, blood—all these finally led us to the aspired aim. The sacrifices of the Libyan people and its historic and genuine alliance with the Chadian people is not an alliance of words, but a blood alliance. [passage omitted]

Our sacrifices, brothers, ultimately led to the victory of the Chadian people.

All those who were in Libya and were fighting from Libya—Libya paid a high price then—have returned to Chad respectable and triumphant. Even those who, by their own conviction, were compelled to fight the Libyans have finally realized that they were wrong. When they admitted that they felt as if they did not stand against the Libyan people, and this admission is very important because it came after suffering and after an experience and a test in which they became certain that the real brother is the Libyan people, and that the Libyan people cannot harm the Chadian people. They benefit Chad. The Libyan people is closer to them than France and the United States—which is beyond the Atlantic Ocean—closer than any power which used Chad against Libya and against the people of Chad themselves. Libyans cannot feel remorse because the cause for which they fought has triumphed. The last link in the common destiny, common struggle, and the common blood is the 1 April uprising by Idriss Deby. Now, our brother, Idriss Deby, has come to reaffirm the unity of the two peoples and the unity of the soil and the unity of the destiny, and to express his thanks to his brothers. We, too, would like to reaffirm to him the unity of destiny and unity of soil and offer him our thanks to the Chadian people, our brothers in Chad, who despite everything done by imperialism and the lackeys did not foresake the Libyan people. He has come to congratulate you on the historic victory after all the sacrifices in Chad, and we, too, would like to congratulate him on this victory after all the sacrifices which the Chadian people made.

Thus, brothers, you can see that this story is not an adventure; it is not an interference; it is not acting beyond one's border. The Chadian territory's freedom is part of the freedom of the Libyan territory, and the Chadian people's freedom is part of the Libyan people's freedom, and vice versa. The Libyan territory's freedom and stability and peace is part of the peace, stability, and freedom of the Chadian territory since the days of the Turks and Italians, and even before those eras and until now. What goes on in Chad is always reflected in Libya, and vice versa. [passage omitted] Your brother, Idriss Deby, has come here to place his hands in yours, and by this brotherhood, unity, and sacrifice, we defy the enemies and lackeys. Our struggle continues! Forward! [cheers and applause]

[Deby] Mr. Secretary of the General People's Congress, Mr. Secretary of the General People's Committee, gentlemen, members of the General People's Congress: It is an immeasurable honor for us to speak to this august assembly on the occasion of our first visit to the great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. From this platform which symbolizes your democracy, we salute you the representatives of the brotherly Libyan people and we pass on to you the warm greetings of the Chadian people and our deep thanks for the very fraternal and friendly welcome which you have given us today. [applause]

Our presence among you today is a clear sign of our will to open a new era in relations between our two countries which so far, it must be admitted, have not undergone the development which our two peoples would have wished.

With the fall of the dictatorship in Chad, we are convinced that the antagonisms between our two people, which were exacerbated by the former regime, will give way to more healthy relations based on a common past, culture, and interests. [applause]

Please allow us to tell you how much the Chadian people, who have suffered so much from the war in the recent past and who have paid the price for this, aspire to peace both inside the country and with their neighbors. We are convinced that this desire for peace is shared by the brotherly people, the brotherly people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. [applause] Our united wills will allow us to develop relations of good-neighborliness, of fraternity with a mutual respect for the principles of noninterference in territorial integrity and national independence.

Moreover, even during this difficult period undergone by Chad, the ties of fraternity between our two peoples continued. One may cite as an example the hospitality which is enjoyed and which continues to be enjoyed by the large Chadian community and the aid granted by the great Jamahiriyah to the Chadian patriots fighting for the liberation of their people. [applause]

After the victory of the Patriotic Salvation Movement, the great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah was the first country to give aid to Chad: food, budgetary, health aid, as well as equipment. [applause] We are anxious here to express to you all our gratitude for this: It is this reality which convinces us that once again we can count on the aid of the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah in the reconstruction work we have begun. In fact, the Chadians, who have been bruised by several years of war, organized pillaging, crime, and bad management need to lay down their arms and embark resolutely on the reconstruction of Chad. To get out of this crisis which is shaking the foundations of our country, we appeal for consistent and disinterested aid from all brotherly and friendly countries, in the front rank of which is Libya.

The Chadian people hope to finally turn the page of war to devote themselves to reconstruction. It is in this spirit that the Patriotic Salvation Movement, from the time of its accession, issued a solemn appeal to all the sons of Chad to forgive one another and to unite in the interest of their country. It is also in this spirit that Chad, anxious to preserve relations of peace and good-neighborliness with all countries, plans to give greater importance to the settlement of possible disagreements through the diplomatic path.

There is good reason here to express satisfaction with the wise decision by the great Jamahiriyah in joint agreement with Chad, to submit all problems for settlement by diplomatic means and in [a spirit of] fraternity and friendship. [applause]

Mr. Secretary-General of the Congress, Mr. Secretary of the General People's Committee, gentlemen, members of the General Congress. That is the message of peace and fraternity and consistent friendship which we want to pass on to you on behalf of the Chadian people [applause] and also the wish of the Chadian people. At the time when we address your august assembly, how could we remain insensitive to the tragedies taking place in Africa and the Middle East? We appeal to all the warring parties to renounce violence and to seek solutions to their problems through dialogue and with respect for the people's rights. Long live the two countries, and I thank you. [applause]

Morocco

Hassan Welcomes Iraqi 'Willingness To Withdraw'

LD1602221491 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Excerpt] The Ministry of Information has issued the following statement:

His Majesty King Hassan II, may God give him victory, flanked by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed and His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, chaired a Council of Ministers meeting at the royal palace in Rabat this afternoon.

In opening the meeting, His Majesty King Hassan II, may God grant him victory, stated that Morocco had noted with satisfaction the stance announced by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, stipulating his willingness to withdraw from Kuwait in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 660, a matter which can be construed as a positive step on the path leading to a just peace in the region, a peace which should be continuous and permanent and taking account of the Iraqi people's dignity, and respecting its territorial integrity.

Afterward the council adopted a draft law on the organization of the security service and 14 other ordinances stipulating an increase in salaries, indemnity for loss of administrative hierarchy, and modifying subordination of some civil servants and local authorities.

The increase in salaries and indemnity also concerns servicemen in the royal armed forces, in the auxiliary forces, and the national security services. Pensions for civil servants and servicemen will also be improved.

The announcement to increase salaries and to improve social security was made in his majesty's speech of 2 January 1990. His Majesty King Hassan II, may God grant him victory, has given his noble directives that such increases should come into force from 1 January 1991. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Al-Bashir Welcomes Iraqi Initiative on Gulf War

NC1702152691 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Major General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Council, by Muhammad al-Sharif; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Sharif] Your Excellency Major General 'Umar al- Bashir, what is your evaluation of the political situation in the wake of the new Iraqi initiative?

[Al-Bashir] We in Sudan regard this initiative as positive and a step in the right direction. The Iraqi brothers have made a very important move toward finding a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis. By declaring their readiness to cooperate with UN Resolution No. 660 and their agreement to withdraw from Kuwait, they have opened the way to a peaceful solution to this problem. The decision or the statement issued by the foreign ministers of the United States and the Soviet Union indicated that if Iraq accepted the principle of withdrawal, it would be possible to achieve a solution. This initiative should thus remove all pretexts for continuing the war, unless there are other objectives at work here and unless there is no real desire on the part of the coalition states to reach a solution. We hope very much that intensive efforts will

be made by the Arab states, particularly those states that call for a peaceful solution to this problem, and by the Soviet Union and Western Europe to use this initiative to end this war, God willing. We call for the intensification of diplomatic efforts. Efforts must also be made to persuade the other forces that there is no justification now for continuing this war.

[Al-Sharif] Your Excellency Maj. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, what is Sudan's role in these efforts?

[Al-Bashir] We are currently holding intensive contacts with the Arab brothers and with some friendly countries to work toward a peaceful solution.

[Al-Sharif] Thank you, Your Excellency Maj. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Appoints Kallel New Interior Minister

LD1802000191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] The presidency has issued the following announcement: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has decided to appoint Mr. Abdallah Kallel as minister of the interior.

Muslim Fundamentalists Attack Party Headquarters

Leadership Denounces Attack

LD1802200191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Following the terrorist aggression against the headquarters of the [party] coordination committee for Tunis-City [the old city], the Political Bureau of the Democratic Constitutional Rally [RDC] has issued a communique saying:

The Political Bureau strongly condemns the horrible criminal aggression committed at dawn on 17 February by a terrorist gang belonging to the so-called Ennahdha movement against the headquarters of the [party] coordination committee in Tunis-City, during which some [party] militants were beaten, tied up, and burned, together with the burning and destruction of equipment and documents.

The Political Bureau considers this aggression all the more serious as it happens at a time when the whole Tunisian people is standing behind its president, Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in sincerity and firmness toward the trial experienced by the Arab nation and the tragedy of the fraternal Iraqi people.

While expressing its high appreciation for the work of its militants and its sympathy for those among them who fell victim to this appalling terrorism, and while sharing the feelings of all the members of the Rally, the Political Bureau affirms that, by resorting to violence and terrorism, this gang has revealed beyond any doubt its malice toward the foundations and stability of civil society, as well as its disregard for Islamic values that honor the sanctity of man and reject rancor and sedition.

The Political Bureau is convinced that Tunisian society, which has a deep sense of civilization and which rejects all forms of violence and extremism, denounces the acts of this terrorist group, which has no link whatsoever with our graceful religion. On the other hand, the Political Bureau affirms its full confidence in justice to deter the aggressors with all firmness in order to guarantee the sanctity of citizens and the preservation of security.

The RDC, the protective shield of civil society, urges all its militants and all the citizens to show more vigilance and energy to protect the gains of our society, and work to thwart the desperate attempts to spread violence and chaos, and to harm the safety of citizens and the dignity of the homeland.

Kallel Comments

NC1902135791 Paris AFP in English 1231 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Tunis, 19 Feb (AFP)—Recent attacks by Tunisia's Muslim fundamentalists against targets linked to the government have ended the regime's flexibility towards public demonstrations of support for Iraq often exploited by Islamic militants.

Hardline Interior Minister Abdallah Kallel, who took over Sunday after an attack the same day against an office of the ruling RDC party, vowed to "defend" the security of Tunisia and "punish abuses with the necessary severity".

Mr. Kallel, who retains his former portfolio as Defense Minister, was appointed at short notice to replace Abdelhamid Escheikh. The latter was reportedly judged to be too lenient towards anti-Iraq protests which the fundamentalists have adroitly exploited for their own political ends.

The government's previous policy of allowing controlled expression of support for Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, to defuse tension, now appears to have been abandoned.

The turning point came Sunday in the wake of an early morning attack on the local headquarters of the RDC at Bab Souiqa in the old district of the capital, when four people were injured.

Thirty masked men armed with knives, clubs and "inflammable liquid" broke into the office about 05:00 a.m. and overpowered four people inside. They tied up two guards and threw what was thought to be petrol over them then set them alight. The other two people were stabbed, according to an Interior Ministry account of the incident.

The guards suffered serious facial burns and are still in the hospital.

Most of those involved in the attack were said Tuesday to have been arrested within the past 24 hours. Sources close to government officials said a large number of people had been detained but not all the "aggressors" were behind bars yet.

The Interior Ministry on Sunday said police had arrested several members of the "gang" who had "confessed to being members of Ennahdha"—the underground Islamic fundamentalist movement.

A report in the daily AL-SABAH said the attack had taken place after dawn prayers at a nearby mosque.

The violence was not the first directly targeting the regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A report in a Tunisian weekly said that during a demonstration at al-Qasrayn (central Tunisia) three weeks ago, Islamic militants attacked and set fire to a vehicle belonging to the Ministry of Agriculture. The driver was burned alive, the report said.

Newspapers have spoken of minor skirmishes in recent weeks at RCD branches and gendarmerie offices in several Tunis suburbs but no casualties had resulted until Sunday.

In the provinces, several demonstrations inspired by the Gulf war have degenerated into clashes with the police. Early this month, a total of nine people were injured when demonstrations at Douz and Kebili turned violent.

The RDC has traditionally been held up by the fundamentalists as the power responsible for all the country's economic and social problems.

The fundamentalist movement in Tunisia, unlike its counterpart in Algeria, is banned and has been harshly repressed under both President Ben Ali and his predecessor Habib Bourguiba.

Ennahdha is officially described as a "terrorist" movement and all but one of its leaders and several hundred of its organisers are in jail.

Abdelfattah Mourou, the only Ennahdha leader still free, has condemned violence by fundamentalists as being contrary to the "Shar'ia"—the Islamic legal code.

The new interior minister was the first official to be appointed by the president when he assumed office in November 1987. Mr. Kallel's first job was as secretary of state to the president. He went over to the defence ministry as secretary-general on April 11 1988 working closely with Mr. Ben Ali who held the post of Defence Minister at that time. A year later Mr. Kallel, now 48, took over as defence minister.

As minister of both interior and defence, Mr. Kallel, is now one of the most powerful men in the government. He is also a member of the RDC Politburo .

Bahrain

Heir Apparent, U.S. Delegation Discuss Gulf War

NC1802164691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Manama, 18 Feb (WAKH)—In Manama today, His Highness Shaykh Hamad Ibn-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the defense forces in Bahrain, received the visiting U.S. Senate delegation led by Senator Samuel Nunn, chairman of the Congress Military Affairs Committee.

His highness the heir apparent and the U.S. delegation reviewed current developments in the region related to the liberation of the fraternal state of Kuwait. They also discussed the political moves in some world capitals and efforts being made to find a settlement to the Gulf crisis.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Ibn-Mubarak Al Khalifah; Shaykh Khalid Ibn-Ahmad Al Khalifah, chief of his highness the heir apparent's court; and U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain Charles Hostler.

British Forces Commander Arrives for Talks 16 Feb

NC1602201991 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1835 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Manama, 16 Feb (WAKH)—Air Force General Sir Patrick Hine, commander of the British joint forces in the Gulf, arrived in Manama this evening on a two-day visit to Bahrain during which he will hold talks with senior officials in the State of Bahrain.

The British military official will discuss the latest developments in the Gulf in light of the continued military operations to liberate the State of Kuwait from the Iraqi aggression in implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. [passage omitted]

Meets With Amir

NC1702085891 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0820 Feb GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Manama, 17 Feb (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Ibn-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, received here this morning Air Force General Sir Patrick Hine, commander of the British joint forces in the Gulf, and his delegation currently visiting Bahrain.

During the meeting, his highness exchanged views with the British military official on the overall current developments in the Gulf region in light of the ongoing Operation Desert Storm for the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and the restoration of its legitimate government under his highness the amir of Kuwait.

Discussions also dealt with bilateral relations and issues of interest to the two friendly countries.

The meeting was attended by Staff Major General Shaykh Khalifah Ibn-Hamad Al Khalifah, deputy commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, and John Alan Shepherd, the United Kingdom's ambassador to Bahrain.

Kuwait

'No Negotiations' With Iraq After Withdrawal

LD1902213591 London KUNA in Arabic 2106 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 February, KUNA—Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, has stressed that there will be no negotiations with Iraq after the withdrawal.

He was qoted by AL-ITTIHAD, published here today, as saying before leaving Cairo: All that there are between us are agreements which have to be implemented. We will not hold negotiations after the withdrawal with the current leadership or any new leadership.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said that Kuwait is committed to reparations which Iraq must pay for the damage caused to Kuwait. He said that he is fully satisfied with the working paper on security arrangements discussed at the meeting of foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt and Syria in Cairo. With regard to Iraq, he stressed Kuwait's concern about preserving a united Arab Iraq. He pointed out that Saddam Husayn's regime is bound to end, because the Arab world would not be able to benefit from Iraq as a state under the shadow of his existence. He expressed his sadness and pain over the civilian victims among the Iraqi people. He said: It makes us just as sad that our brothers in Iraq are getting killed as that our people in Kuwait are getting hit.

Amir Receives Turkish Foreign Minister 15 Feb

LD1502173791 London KUNA in Arabic 1628 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpt] Al-Ta'if, 15 Feb (KUNA)—The amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, received this evening Turkish Foreign Minister Kurtcebe Alpetemocin, and the accompanying delegation who coveyed to his highness a message from Turkish President Turgut Ozal about the development of the situation in the Gulf arena and relations between the two Muslim countries and fraternal peoples. [passage omitted]

ANATOLIA Reports Meeting

TA1502164991 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 1510 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Taif (ANATOLIA)—Foreign Minister Kurtcebe Alptemocin on Friday met the deposed Amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah to discuss the situation in the Gulf.

The deposed shaykh set up court in al-Ta'if after Iraq invaded Kuwait last August.

Present at the meeting in the al-Ta'if Sheraton were Kuwaiti prince and prime minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Awadi, Public Works Minister Jasim al-Musa and Turkey's ambassadors to Kuwait, Riyadh and Baghdad.

No details of what was discussed at the meeting were immediately available.

Alptemocin is scheduled to proceed later to Jeddah and Riyadh for contacts with Saudi officials.

Saudi Arabia is the third and final leg of a three-country Middle East tour which has also taken the foreign minister to Syria.

In Jeddah Alptemocin will meet the general secretary of the Organization of Islamic Conference Hamid al-Ghabid and on Saturday [16 February] he will go to Riyadh where he is scheduled to meet Saudi Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd.

On Sunday he will meet Turkish ambassadors posted in the countries of the region who will gather in Riyadh.

Taking part in the meeting will be Turkey's ambassadors to Syria, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Oman, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Alptemocin will return to Turkey later on Sunday.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Addresses Scholars at 'Jihad' Festival

LD1902235391 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1918 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Address by Saudi Arabian King Fahd to Islamic scholars attending the "jihad" Islamic festival in Riyadh on 19 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, prayers and peace be upon the most honorable of prophets and messengers, our Prophet Muhammad. God's prayers and peace be upon him, his family, and companions. Today is one of the days that will be recorded in the history of this country. It will also be recorded for those attending this Islamic festival. This festival was not called with the intention of harming anyone, or incriminating anyone. The main objective of the call was for intellectual leaders, seekers of knowledge, thinkers, and students of affairs to deliberate the situation we are now in. The situation from which we and all Muslims in the eastern and western parts of the earth are suffering was created by whoever created it—and it has become completely evident to us that he does not want the issue of the State of Kuwait to be settled in the way that is favored by people. This is something that is recorded and known. [passage omitted]

Maybe we should repeat something new in the events that have emerged in the past two days; namely, the Soviet Union's contact with Iraq and other matters that are said to aim at ending what has been done by Iraq. I think that we are all aware that the door was not shut in Iraq's face after it carried out the aggression, after midnight on Thursday [2 August 1990]. I would be the first to dismiss this, as I was in constant contact with the Iraqi president and with His Highness Amir Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah. [passage omitted]

As was mentioned yesterday, they had agreed to meet in Baghdad on Saturday, and by way of further confirmation I had the Iraqi vice president's confirmation. He said yes, we had agreed on this matter, and I am in contact with my government, and we agreed that the meeting would take place on Saturday, and so forth. This was mentioned by the brother sultan. The first one to be surprised was me, in the moments after the Iraqi attack on Kuwait began. If I say that I was surprised, that is precisely what I was. I could not believe the person who informed me of this matter, so much so that my imagination wandered to other things—perhaps what happened to Kuwait was done by another side—until I made sure beyond doubt. I tried at that moment to contact the Iraqi president, but the person who spoke on his behalf apologized that he was not available by telephone.

God knows that when we assisted Iraq the intention was not to harm any other country, and by that I mean the state of Iran. The main objective was to preserve Iraq. It is well known that it is not possible for Iraq to occupy Iran. I will not repeat what I have said previously, on many different occasions, about the cost paid by Saudi Arabia and the effort it made morally, materially, and in international contacts. At the same time we do not want to be involved in any problems with Iran, or harm it; nor, however, do we wish that Iraq be occupied by any party. IT is an Arab and neighboring country, and that was what was behind the attitude of Saudi Arabia. It would be stating the obvious if I tried to detail what Saudi Arabia has done for Iraq. The details have already been given several times, as has what the state, people, and men of Kuwait had done by way of making continuous contact, and on a permanent basis. By that I mean contact with officials in Iraq, in an attempt to make Iraq feel permanently reassured that Kuwait does not want to be involved in a problem or create one for Iraq, for that matter.

As for the issue of borders, I do not think that was the cause. We all know that there is an agreement and a

treaty, and an investigation that was pursued over a long period of time—and that the matter culminated in an agreement between Iraq and Kuwait, ending all problems. This happened in Hasan al-Bakr's time, when Saddam, naturally, did hold a position in the state, and an international agreement was concluded with Kuwait. The Iraqi complaint, in my own opinion, against Kuwait was that the British commissioner was still in Kuwait. This was Iraq's objection [words indistinct] because it was (?desired) that the two countries exchange ambassadors. Kuwait was not restricted by anything—it asked the British commissioner to leave its territory; and so he did. After that, an agreement was signed between Iraq and Kuwait. This was an international official agreement, deposited at the United Nations and at the Arab League and published around the world, and the matter ended with the two states of Iraq and Kuwait.

Anyone who has read history is aware that there is no link between Kuwait and Iraq, except in name; probably at some time in the past even the names were different, according to personal usage [word indistinct]. In what I have read about Kuwait I do not find any text that gives Iraq the claim that Kuwait is linked to it. We have knowledge of the ancient history of the area; the entire area has been under occupation. Portugal was there for hundreds of years. Afterward, Turkey occupied the area, including the Gulf states, Kuwait, Iraq, and a number of Arab countries. When Turkey ended its occupation, Britain took its place in one form or another.

Therefore, there is nothing called Iraq that includes Kuwait. Kuwait is an independent state that in the past was a desert inhabited by al-Sabah and others. The matter ended with there being two states. As for Iraq's claim, it is void. To talk about it would probably be repetition. We thus go back to something very important, and say that the flimsy pretexts put forward by Iraq are indeed flimsy, and are not based on fact. [passage omitted]

The dispute between Iraq and Iran ended. It was established that the fighting between Iraq and Iran forced Iraq to make great efforts and spend very huge sums on building military installations in towns and villages and in the mountains. At one time we said that these were perhaps meant for self-defense, with regard to Iran. However, Iraq continued with the military installations. One was confined to thinking that if there was an Arab state that had such military power, it might benefit the Arab homeland, and whatever reason.

I think this would be required of any Arab state. That is, if it had sufficient military force it could, if required, participate in helping another Arab country, or recover an Arab right—if it had enough powerful military force, which would enable it to perform its Arab duty.

But it did not come to mind that these Iraqi preparations were aimed at starting with Kuwait, to be followed by Saudi Arabia. This is clear, and after this I do not think that it would have stopped at a limit, whether heading East or West. The first person to be astonished by this was me, as was any other observer: What did Iraq want? If it wanted to occupy neighboring Arab countries, and these countries were linked by international and special agreements, it is wrong. Iraq has military forces of all kinds at present: air force, artillery, missiles, and so on. Iraq suddenly occupied Kuwait with no justification other than Saddam's claim that Kuwait had not agreed with him on anything that he claimed to be his. [passage omitted]

It would have been more correct if Iraq had asked the Arab countries to choose a number of Islamic ulema and jurisprudents to consider the matter between Kuwait and Iraq. If Iraq has a legal right, I do not believe that Kuwait would object. If there is not a legal right, Iraq should end this matter, knowing that there is a treaty and an agreement that has defined matters in accordance with the will of Kuwait and Iraq and that Kuwait did not impose its will on Iraq by force, militarily. [passage omitted]

If we want to go in depth into the matter, and reach a conclusion, we ask: What does Iraq want? If it wants petroleum, it has more oil than meets its needs. If it wants some type of mineral, it is certain that Iraq has precious metals, which it could exploit commercially. If it wants people, it has enough people. If it wants arable land, it has the best arable land and rivers. So what does Iraq want from Kuwait?

And what does Kuwait rely upon? It had nothing until God bestowed oil upon it.

Did Iraq, when she was at the peak of her glory and strength and was one of the richest countries with numerous capabilities enabling her to offer assistance—did she offer any help to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the country that was dependent on nothing but more important things: namely, adherence to the book of God and the path of his Prophet, adhering to Arab ethics, and maintaining the close ranks? [passage omitted]

Did Iraq, at that time, when she had the capability, offer Kuwait or Saudi Arabia anything? Never. After the discovery of petroleum in Kuwait and in Saudi Arabia, she started thinking about fully preparing herself militarily. I would wish that such a comprehensive military preparation be for the defense of the Arab nation, anywhere. One might say that this military preparedness was for the benefit of Islam and the Muslims before anything else, and for the benefit of the Arab nation. However, with great regret, these well-prepared forces, prepared with Saudi-Kuwaiti capital, were to occupy Kuwait directly after we have been given a full pledge by Saddam Husayn. [passage omitted]

He asked for my permission, and said that so and so, an officer whose name escapes my memory now, was going to make an a speech on Saddam's behalf. He delivered the speech, which is recorded and known in all Arab circles, known to Saudi Arabia, and is available. He

delivered the speech, praising Saudi Arabia, its leadership, and what the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had done, in a big way.

I was surprised that he presented me with—as is known—a decoration. I accepted it—these are new customs in the world we live in, there is no problem as far as this matter is concerned—and ascribed it an honor to Saudi Arabia. Then I was surprised that he also presented me with a text, signed by him, which was a treaty of nonaggression between Iraq and Saudi Arabia—which is to say that Iraq would not attack Saudi Arabia, and vice versa. I was in fact surprised by that. Why are you presenting me with this? We are, praise God, in concord, countries with agreed borders and no border disputes, with enough guarantees from the Arab League to the effect that no Arab country would be permitted to harm another Arab country—not just in battle, but even verbally. I did not see any need for that, nor any justification. He said that we are desirous of further closeness with Saudi Arabia. Naturally, I saw no harm in that, and signed the agreement, because I...[changes thought] Agreement or no agreement, the question is: Is he acting in good faith, or not? If the intention is good, one's word suffices.

Things took their course, and it eventually became apparent to me, personally, and according to my thinking, that this agreement we mutually signed meant that if he committed an aggression against Kuwait, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would say that between us, the agreement forbids us to interfere—the matter is one between Kuwait and Iraq. No. That was not the first Iraqi attempt. There were many attempts. What I know of them in particular is that at the time of 'Abd-al-Karim Qasim—perhaps some of you brothers from beloved Kuwait who are in attendance know this—that Arab forces at that time were similar, and closer to one another, which prohibited such things. But what suddenly happened after midnight on Thursday is known. Thursday is a holiday, and on Friday people go to mosques to pray to God. Why did happen at that time? In any case, the Iraqi power was the greatest Arab power at that time. Why the greatest Arab power? Because it had participated in fighting for eight years.

It is well known that Kuwait has an Army and an Air Force. If it has gained anything from Iraq what Kuwait has in its hand is understanding on the basis of legitimate right. After what has happened the Iraqi president still criticizes the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's stance as negative. No, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's stance vis-a-vis Kuwait has never been negative since the old days. [passage omitted]

Saddam Husayn's objective was to continue to the Strait of Hormuz and to Oman; that is, from Kuwait to Saudi Arabia to Bahrain to Qatar, to the United Arab Emirates and Oman. This was his thinking. Naturally, this is wrong. [passage omitted] I believe the best thing would be for Saddam to follow this. If he wants international gatherings, there is an international court of justice; he can take his case there. The matter is not who is stronger, or who is more mad; if this were the principle, this would mean that the strong swallows the weak. These matters are over and will not in any case recur. The attitude of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia I believe took the natural course, and had it not been for the initiative [asking for help] taken by the Kingdom, perhaps matters would be even worse than now. [passage omitted]

Now we hear that there are contacts among the superpowers, and it is being said today—we heard on radio and in the news—that there are contacts which may lead to Saddam's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. What is the background to this? When I speak on the topic of Iraq and Kuwait, I do so because I know this issue very well and in full, and I know that this issue was a matter for discussion perhaps 10 years ago, and I know this very well. But it was not Iraq's intention that matters between it and Kuwait should be solved agreeably; rather, it had designs on Kuwait one way or another. God wished for this matter to be settled in such a way that Iraq's hand could no longer extend in any direction, and with God's might it will leave Kuwait. Naturally, one does not know what will happen, but we believe that the world realizes that an end should be put to such matters. [passage omitted]

As you now know, talks have been taking place for two days. We do not know what these talks will lead to. But what concerns us first is that all the Iraqi military forces should withdraw to inside Iraq, both those occupying Kuwait, and those near the Saudi borders. What happens afterward? At any rate, everything in its time, and I believe that matters will not be repeated, God willing. There is no doubt that this is a big event, and at this big gathering, I would like to say that I lived through the Iraq-Iran agreement in 1975. It began in Algiers and started from the OPEC leaders summit conference in Algiers. The shah of Iran at the time was present, the Iraqi president was present and I was present as a representative of King Faysal, may God have mercy on him. I used to know the most minute details from the Iraqi president and from the shah of Iran. An agreement between Iraq and Iran was reached in 1975 and it was signed by both sides [words indistinct]. When the problems started between Iraq and Iran and matters reached the point of fighting, the Iraqi president tore up the 1975 agreement and considered it finished. The war lasted eight years and then matters ended. Then came Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. Saddam once again returned to the 1975 agreement and recovered some of the Iraqi territories which he said that Iran had occupied. He tore up the agreement and then revived the 1975 agreement and conceded territories which he used to claim to be Iraqi and occupied by Iran, after he had occupied them. In a few minutes, he revived an agreement which he had torn up and gave up territories which he used to claim to be Iraqi. The fighting which lasted eight years was over this agreement and these territories. This shows that he proceeds in the wrong way. Naturally a state or a despotic head of state may do things which harm his

state. He may sense some victories, but in the end the harm will be greater. The issue of security concerns world leaders, and I believe that the world has decided firmly and decisively that Iraq must leave Kuwait unconditionally. Of course, each one of us saw what happened in Kuwait. Was what happened in Kuwait the act of Muslims and a Muslim? It is sometimes possible for one to commit aggression against a country or attack, but did he respect Kuwait, or the people of Kuwait, or the men of Kuwait or the sanctities of Kuwait, or the currency of Kuwait?

He regarded it as a country open to all. The Kuwaiti people defied death in defending themselves in one way or another, even by using their hands. [passage omitted]

Now we hear, as I mentioned, that there is a settlement. Any settlement cannot be accepted finally unless Iraq leaves Kuwait and returns to Iraqi territories in letter and spirit without any conditions, and bears responsibility for the consequences of the losses, damages, plundering and usurpation in Kuwait. He destroyed the oil wells and spoiled everything that was in Kuwait. He has harmed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and made the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia responsible for his debts. Demands will be made on Saddam Husayn for all these acts. A despot, we have always known that he had the first and last words in the matter. [passage omitted]

Iraq claims and says that the military forces or the air forces have been striking and killing a number of Iraqis. It is known that the forces which have been attacking military bases are precisely military, they were not attacking human beings or the densely populated areas. But I think that one cannot tell a bomb which falls from above not to hit someone.

The forces which are here now, the joint forces of a number of states [words indistinct] what is Saddam's excuse when he sends until now about 34 deadly missiles to the eastern area and the areas of Riyadh, Hafar al-Batin and others? Are these not also sons of Adam? Are these places combat areas or do they have people in them? Were women, children and men killed? Were houses and homes destroyed? Why does Saddam claim or say that Iraqis were killed and bombs fell on populated areas? [passage omitted] If it were not for God's grace and the missile fighting missiles, they do so up to a point they also caused harm. [sentence as heard] We see them today on Saudi television. They demolished homes and killed people and children and destroyed other things. He claims or he tries to establish proof that the joint forces were striking populated areas. Praise be to God. Are not the Iraqi missiles against Saudi Arabia, which targeted on villages and towns and the urban or rural areas, aimed at people or sons of Adam? [passage omitted]

I say that the Arab nation will only have a standing in this big international community if we return to the base [Islam] which has given value to the Arab nation. [passage omitted]

For the first time the USSR is allowing Muslims to pray openly, for the first time it has agreed that they can practice their faith as they wish. [passage omitted]

What were we thirty years ago, before we had oil? Nothing. We had nothing [words indistinct]. We preserved our Islamic faith in letter and spirit, our Arab morality, and our favored customs and traditions. [words indistinct] I would like to repeat my profound thanks to those who have supported the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, led by our brother Arab countries, Islamic countries, and the friendly countries that have supported us, without any conditions, categorically. I will say openly that there are no obligations that commit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to anything. [passage omitted]

Joint Forces Command Issues Communique No. 33

LD1902200491 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Joint Military Communique No. 33, issued by the Command of the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations in Riyadh on 19 February]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We will make victorious our messengers and the believers in this life. [Koranic verse]

Military Communique No. 33 issued by the Command of the Joint Forces and Theater of Operations, in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the 34th day of Operation Desert Storm, 19 February.

Our Air Force is still carrying out counter-air operations, interdiction operations, air support, and reconnaissance using F-15's, F-5's, Tornado aircraft, the C-130, refueling and early warning aircraft, and helicopters, in addition to the Kuwaiti Skyhawk aircraft and the Qatari, Bahraini, and UAE [United Arab Emirates] Air Force, concentrating these operations on the Republican Guard units, tank and gun positions, and logistics bases.

The air forces of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries have carried out since the beginning of Operation Desert Storm more than 6,200 sorties out of the total of more than 83,000 sorties carried out by the joint forces.

The results of our air forces' sorties today were as follows:

Six enemy tanks were destroyed, along with a munition depot where an additional explosion was seen, a fuel depot was set on fire, enemy mechanized positions were hit, the results of which have not been evaluated yet.

Units from our land forces have yesterday and today carried out joint operations against the enemy in which guns as well as close air support were used.

The two Saudi mine sweepers Safwa and al-Wadia', and the U.S. mine sweepers Adriot, Leader, and Avenger, continue to carry out operations in the north of the Arabian Gulf.

U.S. minesweepers accompanying two Saudi ships, 'Abd-al-Aziz and Tabuk, have discovered some 22 mines, bringing the number of discovered mines so far to 153, out of which 97 mines were destroyed as follows:

—47 mines by the Royal Saudi naval forces;
—45 mines by the U.S. forces, and
—five mines by other naval forces.

Units of the British armored division have carried out artillery shelling of enemy positions, resulting in the destruction of three tanks, three artillery pieces, and three artillery positions.

A U.S. paratrooper unit, supported by helicopters and A-10 aircraft, carried out a joint operation against enemy positions resulting in the destruction of three tanks, three armored personnel carriers, two 122 mm artillery pieces, a missile launcher, 15 munition trucks, and a depot. The friendly forces sustained no losses as a result of this operation.

A U.S. Air Force A-10 was downed this morning and the fate of its pilot is not yet known.

Further on Turkish Foreign Minister's Visit

Meets Deputy Foreign Minister

TA1602200191 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Report by Serdar Dimli from Riyadh]

[Text] Tomorrow, Foreign Minister Kurtcebe Alptemocin will end his visits to certain Middle East countries in connection with the latest developments in the Gulf crisis. The latest leg of his tour is Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia. The foreign minister arrived here from Jeddah this morning. He was received by Deputy Foreign Minister Shaykh 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Thunayyan. The Saudi foreign minister was not at the welcoming ceremony because he is in Cairo, meeting with the countries that sent troops to the allied force in the Gulf. He is expected to return to Riyadh this evening.

This afternoon, Alptemocin met with Turkish ambassadors to regional countries. The ambassadors discussed the effects of the Gulf crisis on the countries in which they serve, the effects on these countries' relations with Turkey, and their views on the postwar period.

Alptemocin also met Saudi State Minister Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud. The Saudi minister reportedly paid Alptemocin a courtesy visit.

The foreign minister will leave Saudi Arabia for Turkey tomorrow.

Conveys Ozal Message to King

LD1702171791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1522 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Riyadh, 17 Feb (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, received a message from Turkish President Turgut Ozal.

The message was delivered to the king by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin during an audience at the king's office at al-Yamamah Palace today.

The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the Saudi foreign minister; Ibrahim al-'Anqari, the private adviser to the king; Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, Saudi minister of state and member of the Council of Ministers; and Yashar Yakish [name as received], Turkish ambassador to the Kingdom.

Departs 17 Feb

LD1702172491 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1613 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 17 Feb (SPA)—Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin left Riyadh this evening after a visit to the kingdom. [passage omitted]

Charge d'Affaires: USSR Seeks Complete Answer

PM1902141891 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Feb 91 p 2

[Report by Hasin al-Bunyan: "Soviet Charge d'Affaires in Riyadh: Saddam Responsible for Destruction Caused by War"]

[Text] Riyadh, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The Soviet charge d'affaires in Riyadh has said that Saddam Husayn is responsible for all the losses and destruction that this war is inflicting on the Iraqi forces and innocent civilians. Aleksandr Zasypkin told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that "Saddam Husayn's insistence on remaining in Kuwait is regrettable and not in line with the interests of the peoples of the region, including the Iraqi people."

He said that the aim of Soviet envoy Yevgeniy Primakov was to try to persuade Saddam Husayn to withdraw from Kuwait.

He added: We believe that Saddam's obstinacy and insistence on staying in Kuwait is regrettable, and Saddam will be responsible for what happens in this war.

He said that the Soviet position remains steadfast and has not changed: It is that the Iraqi forces must withdraw from Kuwait in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. He pointed out that the Soviet Union had voted for the use of all necessary means to achieve that objective and that it was fully committed to the implementation of the Security Council resolutions.

The Soviet charge denied the reports about the arrival of Soviet military aid and experts in Iraq.

He said: These are unfounded rumors designed to falsify the Soviet position and to cast doubt on Soviet policy in the Middle East. Zasypkin reaffirmed that the Soviet Union stopped its direct and indirect military dealings with Iraq when the Iraqi forces invaded the state of Kuwait and that only 12 Soviet diplomats remain in Baghdad.

With regard to whether or not the Soviet leadership is under internal pressure to change the Soviet position on the Gulf war, he said that Soviet policy is formulated on the basis of decisions made by the USSR Supreme Soviet and president, which have been declared to be firm decisions in complete agreement and harmony with the position of the international community as reflected in the Security Council resolutions.

The Soviet charge d'affaires reaffirmed that the Soviet Union is interested in finding a comprehensive political settlement for all issues of the region and that it is constantly searching for paths to such a settlement, and especially a political settlement of the Gulf conflict. If this is achieved, he said, new possibilities will emerge for the settlement of the other problems in the region, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With regard to the Soviet position on a new security system in the region, Zasypkin said that the region's states must play an essential part in such a system, that it would not be useful if done under the cover of one state, but that the international community could provide the necessary security guarantees through the United Nations and the Security Council.

He added: For such a system to exist, agreements must be reached for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and other measures must be taken to end the arms race in the region.

With regard to the Soviet position in the event of new developments in the current war, such as use of mass destruction weapons, he affirmed that the use of mass destruction weapons, whether nuclear or chemical, would lead to a catastrophe not only in the region but throughout the world.

He added: We should take into consideration the possiblity that the course of this war could get out of international control.

He added that the military operations in this war must not exceed the limits of liberating Kuwait and also preserving civilian lives and Iraq's territorial integrity.

French Prime Minister Rocard Departs 15 Feb

LD1502083991 Riyadh SPA in English 0344 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Excerpt] Riyadh, Feb 13 [date as received], SPA—French prime minister, Michel Rocard left here tonight after a short visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during which he was received by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques. He was seen off at the airport by Prince Sattam Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the vice governor of the Riyadh region, Faysal al-Hujaylan, the minister of health, the French ambassador to the Kingdom and many senior officials. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Fighters Attack Iraqi Positions in Kuwait

NC1802185691 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1825 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 18 Feb (WAKH)—The Armed Forces General Command has announced that Air Force aircraft from the United Arab Emirates [UAE], in cooperation with the international coalition forces, carried out four air raids on Iraqi forces' positions in Kuwaiti territory over the past 24 hours.

The EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY said that the UAE Air Force had previously taken part in the military operations as part of Operation Desert Storm for the liberation of Kuwait.

Pakistani Minister Gives Sharif Message to Zayid

NC1302155491 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1435 GMT 13 Feb 91

[Text] Al-'Ayn, 13 Feb (WAKH)--His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has received a message from Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on cooperation between the two countries and the developments in the Gulf in light of the war to liberate Kuwait. The message also deals with recent Kuwaiti efforts to stop the war and secure Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

Shaykh Surur Bin-Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, chief of the Presidential Office, received the message during his meeting today with Chaudry Hamid Nasir, Pakistani minister of planning, development, science, and technology, and his delegation. The two officials discussed aspects of cooperation between the two countries and ways to expand them in various development fields.

Departs 15 Feb

NC1502140291 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1030 GMT 15 Feb 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 15 Feb (MENA)—Chaudhary Hamid Nasir Chatha, Pakistani minister of planning, development, science, and technology, today left Abu Dhabi with his accompanying delegation, following a visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] that was a part of a regional tour.

During the visit, the Pakistani minister handed a written message to UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan from Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

The message deals with the current developments in the region as well as bilateral relations.

Iraqi Statement Seen as 'Document of Surrender'

NC1702105091 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0800 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Manama, 17 Feb (WAKH)—Today's Gulf Arabic papers continued in their headlines and commentaries to talk about the military operations in the Gulf to liberate Kuwait and the preparations under way regarding the expected land offensive. [passage omitted]

In today's commentary, AL-FAJR, published in the United Arab Emirates, described the recent Iraqi statement as a document of surrender, and said it undoubtedly reveals the state of hopeless desperation of the Iraqi regime, now that the limbs of its military forces have been dismembered and its morale has deteriorated to the lowest possible level.

It clarified that the Iraqi regime is not fighting but is finding it sufficient to receive blows and air, sea, and land bombardment. This is why it is on the margins of the battle, and does not have any noteworthy activity in it other than within the framework of the media war through the military communiques teeming with illusory facts which have no link to reality.

It said that the statement issued by the Iraqi Revolution Command Council agreeing to deal with Security Council Resolution 660 at first created joy and happiness on both the Arab and international levels. The Iraqi people were the ones who were the happiest, since the Iraqis believed that the nightmare of war was over. However, this happiness did not last, since this step was a huge effort that resulted in a meager outcome.

Concluding its commentary, the newspaper said the conditions set by the Iraqi regime in its statement are completely different from the international community's resolutions, and cannot be produced except by a victorious side which can dictate its conditions. The fact of the matter is that Iraq is suffering a series of defeats and is not fighting at all. Its soldiers are hiding in their trenches, awaiting the hell that is approaching them. [passage omitted]

Saddam Chairs Revolution Command Council 19 Feb

NC1902212891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn has chaired a meeting, attended by Revolution Command Council [RCC] member 'Izzat Ibrahim; Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and first deputy prime minister; and Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, vice president of the Republic.

The meeting was also attended by Sa'di Mahdi Salih, National Assembly speaker; Culture and Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim; Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation 'Abd-al-Wahhab Mahmud; and the deputy chairman of the farmers cooperative societies.

The meeting discussed the means of developing the agricultural sector and providing the necessary needs required for maintaining its success.

'Aziz, Hammadi Return After Moscow Talks

NC1902233991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 2245 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned to Baghdad yesterday [19 February] after a two-day visit to the Soviet Union. The delegation accompanying the deputy prime minister and foreign minister included Sa'dun Hammadi, deputy prime minister and Revolution Command Council member. The delegation held meetings with officials in the Soviet Union dealing with the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression on Iraq and the situation in the Arab region.

'Senior Soviet Military Delegation' Arrives

LD1902235291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The Palestinian news agency has reported that a senior Soviet military delegation [representing] the general command of the Soviet Army arrived in Baghdad this evening from Moscow.

The agency said that the head of the Soviet military delegation told its correspondent in the Iraqi capital that the delegation will meet a number of Iraqi military commanders.

Communique Details Allied Attacks, Response

NC2002104591 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0933 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Communique No. 55 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 20 February 1991—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate: The enemies of Iraq, Arabs, and Muslims, and the adversaries of humanity's aspirations for a secure world characterized by freedom and justice—namely, the American policymakers and their agent Zionists, as well as the NATO alliance and its agents—have rejected all honest, peaceful attempts made by Iraq from a position of strength, and by peace advocates the world over. They have thus openly revealed that, contrary to all their claims, they did not come with their fleets and troops to liberate anyone. They are the strongest opponents of freedom. They did not come to save anyone except their agent. They lit the fuse of this war in order to occupy and stay on Arab land, to exploit its men and resources, and to deplete its wealth in a conflict that brings harm to its sons. They endeavor to destroy every opportunity available to Arabs to unite, achieve progress, and invest their resources in useful fields.

They did not hesitate to desecrate Arab sanctities and direct their aggression against secure citizens and the infrastructure established by Iraq to serve its sons and its nation.

Seeing in Iraq a power which seeks everything good, establishes peace, calls for cooperation, raises the flag of justice and equality, and works for purging the land from the Zionist filth, they directed all the forces available to them against Iraq and its rennaissance.

However, after all the aggression they have committed against us, and judging by facts, we find that they have failed to break our force, weaken our people's morale, or affect our Armed Forces. We have not ceased to defy them. Under the banner of God is great, we will continue to act as a formidable fence before the aggressors. We will continue to hold tightly to all the capabilities [muqaddirat] which help us, with God's guidance, to come out of this battle safe and sound, as well as victorious.

Following is an account of our activities and the enemy's attacks during the past 24 hours:

First: A combat unit backed by helicopters attempted to advance toward one of our units in the southern operations sector. Our valiant and heroic fighters confronted them with all types of weapons, succeeded in repulsing the attempt and inflicting important losses in personnel, weapons and equipment, and forced the remaining enemy force to flee deep into Saudi territories.

Second: The enemy continued its crimes against civilian and residential targets in our country. He carried out 58 raids that targeted the houses of the citizens in residential areas, one mosque, a secondary school for girls, a secondary school for boys, a trade union center, several bridges and crossing points, several small fishing boats, and several civilian facilities that extend daily services to the citizens.

The enemy also carried out 90 air raids on some military targets in the southern operations sector.

Such crimes will only ignite the Iraqi wrath against the aggressors. Our Armed Forces are fully prepared to fight until the honorable and victorious end is realized. The

aggressors' false claims and cheap clowning will not do them any good. We derive our power from the omnipotent Almighty.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command

[Dated] 4 Sha'ban Hegira 1411, corresponding to 20 February 1991

Statement Adds Details

NC2002121291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1140 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Statement by Iraqi military spokesman on 20 February—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate: This is in addition to our Military Communique No. 55 which was issued at noon today.

Since criminal Zionism is the principal instigator of the aggression against Iraq; because it is a principal partner to it; since it is Zionism which stands in the way of the peace opportunities provided by Iraq, in expression of our country's capability, in embodiment of its invincible power by the will of God, and in implementation of our people and nation's determination to take revenge from all criminal tyrants, our heroic missile force has dealt a destructive blow to the city of Tel Aviv, the capital of the Zionists. Our missiles destroyed their targets.

Thanks to God, the supporter of the faithful mujahidin, and glory and honor to the heroic officers and men of our missile force. The launchers of our missiles have returned safely, thank God.

[Dated] 20 February

Jasim Reacts to Schwarzkopf Remarks on Army

NC2002164191 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1514 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Commenting on remarks made by Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. forces in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia], Latif Nusayyif Jasim, minister of culture and information, made the following statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY: Every day, one of the criminals of the U.S.-Zionist aggression against Iraq and the Arab nation makes statements in which he tries to patch up the psychological condition of the aggressive forces, in an attempt to help them hold out in the confrontation with the valiant, victorious forces. This person, Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces, following at the heels of the clique of the war criminal George Bush, makes statements to this or that paper. The most recent product of his rotten brain is his statement to the LOS ANGELES [TIMES] in which he said that Iraq is being, as he alleges, exhausted. However, this damned person hastily tries to correct himself by listing indisputable facts about our valiant Iraqi Armed Forces. Thus, scrapping his first idea, he says that the Iraqis' capability must not be underestimated. Thus, the criminal of aggression, Schwarzkopf, adds a new blunder to the blunders of his criminal clique.

He and others are well aware of the growing power—in personnel and equipment—of the victorious Iraqi Army, and the accumulating experience of our Armed Forces. He also knows, better than others, that the remnants of the failing allied forces, which have been chased by our brave fighters in many areas and positions and have been forced to taste the Iraqis' strong fire, will not be able to match the proud Iraqi Army's combat experience.

The lies and illusions unleashed by the criminal clique of war and aggression, the likes of Schwarzkopf, will deceive no one who has vision and insight. They and their thoughts will prove to be failures. The zealous fighters of the victorious Army of Iraq are erecting a wall around the homeland and standing proudly under the leadership of heroic President Saddam Husayn. This army has experienced every tactic of combat, to which the battlefields testify. The army has sufficient faith, valor, and willingness to sacrifice to deter every sinful aggressor, and to crush every unjust aggression. Whoever among the immoral dwarves of the aggressive alliance wants to try his luck will be given blazing fire. The fodder of this fire will be the aggressors and their agents, along with Fahd, Husni, and all the betrayers of the Arab nation and Muslims. Then, regret will be of no avail.

Effects of Oil Rationing Discussed

NC1802145691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 18 Feb 91

[By Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Azim]

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (MENA)—In a statement published here today, the Iraqi Oil Ministry has warned Iraqi citizens of the dangers of using petroleum liquids [sawa'il naftiyah] contained in cylinders [al-istiwanah] as fuel for cars. The ministry warned that this process is fraught with great danger for the safety and lives of the citizens and the automobile engines, in addition to the damage done to the cylinders. Thus, this process will endanger the life of anyone who tries to refill a car with gas.

It should be noted that the citizens were forced to resort to this method and mixed these liquids with kerosene to use as car fuel after gasoline was rationed recently.

Trade Unionists Cable Saddam, Emphasize Victory

NC1902150491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1320 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Feb (INA)—The Iraqi workers have affirmed that the goal of the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression is to destroy Iraq's infrastructure and economic, scientific, and cultural institutions.

The Emergency Central Council of the General Federation of Trade Unions has sent a cable to President

Saddam Husayn saying that the deluded, false, untruthful, and sham illusions the aggressor forces are using as pretexts have been exposed by their criminal actions, represented by their malevolent bombardment of the residential areas and by hitting innocent children, women, and old people.

The Council added that the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression will be crushed by the courageous Iraqis and their leader President Saddam Husayn in the mother of battles.

The Council noted in its cable that Iraq will triumph, and the wicked American-Atlantic Alliance and its midget and mercenary collaborators will be defeated.

The Council emphasized that the Iraqi workers have mobilized all their capabilities since the beginning of the major battle and, together with the sons of our people, have contributed to consolidating steadfastness and preparing the requisites of victory against the evil enemies.

Reportage on Allied Strikes, Damage, Response

'Prayer Gathering' Said Attacked

LD1802205991 Tehran IRNA in English 1815 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 18 Feb, IRNA—An official at Iraq's Ministry of Culture and Information told IRNA that a Friday prayer gathering was strafed and several houses, schools and shops were destroyed in an American air raid on the northern Iraqi city of al-Mawsil Friday last.

The official, who requested to remain anonymous, said the invading aircraft martyred 4 worshippers and wounded 60 others.

Using napalm bombs and rockets the American warplanes also destroyed 34 shops, two schools and 70 houses in al-Mawsil, he added.

'Powerful Explosions' in South 19 Feb

LD1902095691 Tehran IRNA in English 0929 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., Feb. 19, IRNA—Eight powerful explosions in southern Iraqi cities, neighboring this southern province, were heard at 10:20 hours local time (06:50 GMT) Tuesday after heavy missile attacks and air raids of the U.S.-led allied forces.

The explosions were so powerful that they rattled windows in Abadan, Khorramshahr and part of Dasht-e Aadegan in this province.

The invading planes also bombed the vicinity of the Iraqi port- city of Basra at 08:45 (05:15 GMT) and 09:00 (05:30 GMT) this morning.

Damage in Baghdad Noted

LD1902114291 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 91

[All place names as heard]

[Text] Reporters inspected four bombed areas in Baghdad as well as a bridge over the Tigris River which links the two sections of Baghdad that was recently bombed. According to an IRNA report, in the bombed district of Kefah, eight residential units and 14 stores were totally destroyed, killing eight and injuring 30. In the Salahiyah district, the scale of the damage is more extensive. For instance, 105 stores and 32 houses have been damaged and a mosque has sustained damage. It is said that in this district, nine people were killed and 45 injured. And in the Husayniah district of Taraf al-Karimat, a number of old residential units were ruined, but there were no casualties. According to the same report, the last area inspected was Tabawin in which 21 residential units, 1 aluminum factory, and 2 coffee shops were totally destroyed, killing 1 and injuring 80.

The access bridge over the Tigris was also totally destroyed in three sections to such an extent that it can no longer be used. On the basis of the same report, Baghdad did not have a minute's peace last night; the sound of sirens were audible throughout the night. However, no information has been received regarding area bombardments. According to the correspondents, the people's morale in Baghdad is high, and they are taking the bombardments with much tolerance.

Eastern Cities Hit 19 Feb

LD2002085291 Tehran IRNA in English 0640 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Ilam, Feb. 20, IRNA—Four powerful explosions occurred in eastern Iraqi cities from 21:30 local time (18:00 GMT) till 21:40 local time (18:10 GMT) Tuesday night.

The sound of explosions were heard in this western province and it was likely that bombs and missiles had hit the remaining oil installations in the cities of Badrah, Mandali, Zurbatiyah and Missan [placename as received].

After a 24 hours of relative calm, the U.S.-led Western forces intensified their attacks against Iraq's eastern cities and remaining economic installation there.

'Heavy' Overnight Bombing of Baghdad

LD2002090191 Tehran IRNA in English 0728 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 20, IRNA—The U.S.-led allied forces intensified their air attacks on military-economic centers and residential areas in the Iraqi capital Tuesday after disclosure of the outcome of Baghdad-Moscow talks on finding a way out for the Persian Gulf war.

Heavy bombardment of Baghdad was resumed at 23:00 hours local time (19:30 GMT) and explosions were heard every five minutes till 03:30 local time (24:00 GMT) Wednesday.

Panicked Baghdad residents rushed to the streets to escape to the nearby villages by car, cart or carriage.

Despite heavy bombardments, there were only minor fires in the city suggesting that bridges were hit by multinational forces. This, however, was denied later.

U.S. Warned of Nation's 'Superiority' on Ground

NC1602173791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1345 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Much has been said in the past few days about the imminence of an abortive U.S-Atlantic ground attack against the Iraqi troops. As is the case in all U.S. propaganda that is void of everything but misleading maneuvering, the matter is being portrayed as a picnic for its male and female soldiers soon ending with few and insignificant casualties.

We in steadfast and heroic Iraq heard before the start of the battle, along with the rest of the world, how America, with the same tone used in statements and high-sounding speeches, depicted the air attacks against Iraq. It said that they would be swift and lightning attacks and that they would achieve their aggressive and evil goals within a few hours. Later, they said that the attacks would last a few days instead of a few hours because Iraqi defenses were strong and because the Iraqis did a good job in camouflaging their military might, thus making the process of striking and destroying it a difficult proposition that required additional air sorties. But, it has transpired from their statements that 30 days of intensive and aggressive U.S.-Atlantic raids have failed to destroy the growing Iraqi power, that it is still in good shape, and that it is capable of confronting and inflicting heavy losses on the U.S. military force.

Here they are today saying that the land war will be swift and without many casualties and that the American troops will sweep the Iraqi troops with minimum casualties by depending on the advanced technology the United States is bragging about. We tell the evil alliance that all that your masters sitting in their holes are hoping for is pure imagination. If U.S. aircraft have managed to fire their missiles from a distance, hitting Iraqi cities and economic and cultural installations, the situation is completely different on the ground, where 1 million valiant Iraqi fighters are amassed, armed with an unshaken belief in the justice of their cause, as well as the high combat experience enjoyed by each Iraqi soldier which makes him superior to his enemy, no matter what this enemy possesses in terms of weapons, numbers, and equipment.

If modern technology works in the air battles, the reality of the land confrontation is completely different, because it primarily depends on the human factor more than on the quality and degree of advancement of the weapons. Iraq's superiority in this regard is clear, as admitted by all the military and political analysts interested in the region's affairs. Therefore, any talk by the United States about its ability to decisively end the land battle in its favor in a short period of time and in record speed is one closer to imagination than to reality. The Iraqis have made the necessary preparations for the ground battle and are determined to avenge the aggressors' crimes committed against our people and our courageous and lofty Iraqi cities. It will be a historic battle and a source of pride and admiration for all the good Arabs and Muslims in the world, in which victory will be for heroic Iraq and its struggling and patient people. God is great.

Reportage, Commentary on UK Explosions, Gulf Role

Explosions Linked to Gulf Role

NC1802112491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1040 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] London, 18 Feb (INA)—British officials have advised their citizens not to travel to London for their own safety in the wake of two major explosions at Victoria and Paddington stations in the center of the British capital.

British police sources said the explosion that rocked Victoria station, the largest rail station in London, caused a large number of injuries and paralyzed all train movement to and from London.

The sources claimed that the Paddington explosion caused no casualties. They said investigations to determine the causes of the explosions have started. Some sources linked the explosions to opposition of Britain's participation in the aggression against Iraq.

UK Gulf Involvement Viewed

NC1902113691 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 19 Feb 91

[From the "Comments on the News" program]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: During the past few days, the capital of imperialism, evil, and aggression—London—has been turned into an arena of confrontation, explosions, and acts of violence, revealing the regime's shaky position, weakness, unpopularity, and inability to maintain security and solve national problems by democratic means.

A series of explosions took place in London yesterday. These involved major train and underground stations, including Victoria and Paddington Stations. At least one person was killed and 43 others were wounded at Victoria Station. These huge explosions, which were carried out by the secret Irish Republican Army [IRA], took

place just two weeks after the rocket attack on the 10 Downing Street building, seat of British Prime Minister John Major. These acts of violence reveal the form of dictatorship and domination prevailing in political life and the system of government, contrary to what the regime claims regarding its false democracy, respect for human rights, and sovereignty of justice and law. These explosions were not isolated actions or a unilateral endeavor. They were among the acts of defiance and resistance which the secret IRA has been carrying out regularly against British institutions and centers in revenge and protest for the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

Thus, Britain, the old, collapsing, and evil empire, is involved in an escalating civil war which is disturbing its domestic situation, dividing the people, and destroying the government's popularity just as it is destroying Britain's position abroad and its role in Europe and the world.

What concerns us is that a state like Britain, involved in a civil war, has thrust itself into the fire of a foreign aggressive war for no other purpose except to please its American ally, follow in its footsteps, and, hopefully, get the remainder of what is left over in occupation, domination, and aggression. Perhaps the British Government's objective in these foreign aggressive designs is to try to export its domestic difficulties and to divert the attention of the British citizen to what is taking place abroad. This is in addition to its old colonialist, aggressive objectives. This is a policy that has remained almost unchanged despite the change in governments. Although the infamous Thatcher was the most enthusiastic about hostility toward Iraq and about pushing toward war against it, no tangible change has taken place after her downfall—although the war was a decisive factor in her downfall.

[Passage indistinct] the son of the dancer and acrobat: If you live in a house made of glass, do not throw stones. Isn't this what the wise proverb says? Will they learn a lesson [words indistinct]? God [words indistinct] malicious joy.

Criticism Over Al-Fallujah Bombing

NC1902161291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1309 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] It is certain that the American-Zionist aggression against Iraq is not like a hunting excursion for the British forces in the Arabian Peninsula, near the habitat of the gazelle that is much celebrated in Arabic poetry. Rather, it is a venture involving an attempt to overpower strong Iraqi lions that have always devoured their hunters and those frustrated lackeys who tried to track them down. This is the real reason why the forces of aggression are avoiding a direct confrontation with Iraqi forces, and why they have adopt a cowardly approach that depends on striking from a distance, with aircraft, for example, and then running away. We cannot call this approach fighting, because fighting involves actual confrontation; that is, a soldier confronting a soldier and a tank confronting another, as the whole world knows. This method is a modern version of evasion, like hit-and-run. It lacks any attribute of courage [word indistinct]. This attribute, no longer found in the West, has been replaced by technology and computerized devices. This is why Britain has called one of its advanced bombs smart [preceding word in English], which means clever. This bomb is laser-guided to hit its target. However, it seems that all British minds, just as their bombs, have been robbed of their cleverness. The stupid, criminal bomb has been put in the hands of professional criminals, who are also descendants of professional criminals. Thus, the bomb hit innocent citizens in the marketplace and stores owned by innocent citizens in al-Fallujah city on the banks of the immortal Euphrates river, committing a new massacre to be added to the series of brutal massacres committed by the Atlantic-American-Zionist aggression forces against our mujahid people.

Undoubtedly, the computerized cleverness used by the American-Atlantic aggressors has deserted their minds and their destructive machines. The British military spokesman, who bragged about the number of sorties carried out by British aircraft and kept silent on the number of British Tornadoes shot down by Iraqi defenses, this time attributed the al-Fallujah massacre to a mistake made by the British smart bomb that did not hit its designated target—a peaceful bridge used by pedestrians and not for military purposes.

May God fight malice when it becomes utter, comprehensive stupidity, such as the stupidity prevailing today in Britain in its statesmen, machines, and minds. It is the stupidity of base criminals who have inherited baseness one generation after another, and have been pursuing aggression against peoples to plunder their wealth.

We tell the stupid statesmen of Britain: You know the Iraqis better than your accomplices, the Americans, do. You are aware that the Iraqis are known for their iron will and their clinging to their freedom and independence. Perhaps you remember that they never remain silent when they are done injustice, and that they never let a sinful aggressor get away with his deed.

Talk Assails UK

NC1902182991 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1417 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] London has admitted the crime committed by the British Air Force by bombing a market crowded with Iraqi citizens in the center of al-Fallujah city. As usual, London claimed a mistake had been made in guiding the missile. Thus, with all insolence, impudence, [words indistinct] rancor, and aggressiveness, the British Government, with its criminal history, declared that firing British missiles at defenseless Iraqi citizens was the

result of a [words indistinct] mistake, as if it were referring to a grammatical error or a misprint in a newspaper.

Thus, Iraqi citizens were killed in a treacherous manner by British missiles, and the reason given was a mistake in guiding. Is this excuse not uglier than the (?deed)? Is this not another lie of hard hearts and rotten minds, the hearts and minds of colonialists? Yet will old Britain feel ashamed of its ugly deeds? Does its conscience feel any remorse as it [words indistinct] in the blood of innocent sons of our people?

The heinous crime committed by the aggressive Britons against defenseless citizens is to be added to the British criminal record and to Britain's crimes that have been committed in Iraq since the turn of this century. Iraqi memory retains all of Britian's ugly crimes and deeds and the acts of suppression and torture it practiced during the eras of direct colonization of Iraq. The images of British aircraft hurling treacherous and [words indistinct] bombs exactly as happened in al-Fallujah the other day, hurling bombs at the revolting sons of our people and their brave vanguards and forces in their continuing revolution and uprisings against the English.

The Iraqis took revenge on the invading and occupying British colonizer, defeating him with slings and spears. Even if they have nothing else, they will avenge our martyrs and every drop of pure blood shed in treachery by British missiles in a manner commensurate with the scope of the crime.

Since the Americans committed their abominable crime that embodies all their feuds, racism, and enmity for the Iraqis in the al-'Amiriyah air raid shelter, the Britons did not lag behind in committing another crime in al-Fallujah that is no less outrageous and ugly. The Americans and Britons were in a feverish race to carry out acts of genocide against the sons of our people, while the United Nations and its Security Council did not raise a mere [words indistinct] accusastion or objection to these massacres of civilians. Britian raised a hue and cry when Iraq handed down an (?execution) verdict on the Zionist spy, a bearer of a British passport. British circles, press, and information media launched a vicious racist campaign against Iraq for executing a dangerous spy who admitted his (?identity), evidence, and facts about his crimes. Britain, however, a country of alleged democracy and hypocrite defense of human rights, commits [words indistinct] against defenseless civilian population and admits it, claiming a mistake in guiding without [words indisitnct] demand for passing a legal punishment on the criminals [words indistinct].

Will old Britain, whose empire [word indistinct] admit its rancor, racism, and [words indistinct] contradictory positions and disavowal of human and ethical values as it admitted its crime against the steadfast sons of our people?

Paper Condemns Syrian President's Position

NC1802151391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 2 (INA) [dateline as received]—AL-JUMHURIYAH denounces the policy of treason and enmity on the issues of the Arab nation that Hafiz al-Asad persists in pursuing, and that confirms his agentry, subservience, and links with imperialist and Zionist circles.

In today's editorial, the paper says that the intensive and frenzied shuttle trips made by the al-Asad regime's officers to various geographical areas only aim at extinguishing the pan-Arab flame shining in Baghdad. It adds that there is only one white and unblemished page that Hafiz al-Asad and his clique could add to their black and disgraceful record to atone for some of their grave sins, and that is to declare their solidarity with the 2 August 1990 uprising against Qarun al-Sabah and their joy at the return of the Kuwaiti branch to its Iraqi origin.

AL-JUMHURIYAH regrets that the sons of Arabism have not seen or heard any Syrian sign in this direction, not even a faint or timid one. It says: The opposite has been the case. Hafiz al-Asad's stand was one of enthusiastic dance and songs with the al-Sabah qaruns and the thieves of Arab oil.

It goes on to say: Hafiz al-Asad's support for the U.S. army of occupation has been firm and solid. He gloats over every American and Zionist missile that destroys a stone and kills a child in Iraq. His stand is one of categorical rejection of any pan-Arab Iraqi attempt to link the problems of the Arab nation. The flirtation between the Hafiz al-Asad regime and Tel Aviv has been open and unrestrained.

Paper Warns of Coalition's Defeat in Land War

NC1802154491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1450 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (INA)—AL-THAWRAH has warned the leaders of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist alliance that their forces would suffer a heavy defeat at the hands of the Iraqi forces in a possible ground action.

AL-THAWRAH, the mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, said in today's editorial that the various corps of the Iraqi Armed Forces have braced themselves for the winning, decisive battle.

The paper added that the invaders will be met with the full force of Iraqi fury, like lightning and an overwhelming torrent. Iraqi wrath will crush and wreak havoc with the enemy buildup as never happened in history before. They will be punished for their barbaric crimes against women, children, and the elderly of Iraq, and for the physical destruction they have caused.

Paper: Nation 'Neither Obstinate nor Intransigent'

NC1802145191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1320 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, Feb (INA) [dateline as received]—AL-'IRAQ has emphasized that the U.S. Administration's determination to pursue war has undercut all efforts to promote a political settlement in the region.

Writing under the headline "Why War and What Next?", the paper writes in an editorial today that the United States has all along been bent on thwarting all peaceful solutions. Hence the cold shoulder with which has greeted Iraq's call for dialogue, with Bush declaring his rejection to sit down at the negotiating table.

Not only has the American President shown disdain for the notion of dialogue, but he also resorted to bluster, imagining that Iraq could be bowed by threats to use force, and his miscalculations have led him to indulge his illusions, the paper added.

AL-'IRAQ goes on that far from breaking Iraqi will, these threats and bluster only serve to stiffen its resolve. Iraq is neither obstinate nor intransigent but bound to its responsibilities and constant in its principles. Iraq has never ruled out the notion of dialogue or negotiation but has refused to talk under threats.

The paper stressed that the United States has systematically turned a deaf ear to calls for dialogue, with the war option uppermost on its mind, even long before 2 August 1990.

This war is about something more serious than the reinstitution of legitimacy or the so-called Gulf crisis, AL-'IRAQ concluded.

Paper Says U.S. Aware of Iraq's 'Many' Surprises

NC1902135891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Feb (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH, the mouthpiece of the Iraqi Armed Forces, has said that our surprises are many and that we have decisive victory on our side. The paper adds: If Iraq's first surprise was its steadfastness, then it also possesses many other surprises. The Atlantic-American enemy above all others is aware of the sizes of these surprises and the extent of their impact on America, its future, and its position in the world, as well as their impact on the Zionist entity. America wants to destroy the force of Iraq and kill its people to maintain a secure and stable life for this monstrous entity. In today's editorial, AL-QADISIYAH affirms that if the invaders insist on continuing to strike at Iraq, to kill civilians, and to continue the war, surprises will follow, and then the series of terrible surprises cannot be stopped. These surprises will increase Iraq's influence and position in the hearts of the Arabs, Muslims, and free men in the world and degrade the prestige of all those who participated in and contributed to the aggression against Iraq.

AL-QADISIYAH says: The glorious sons of Iraq have proven in the mother of battles that the genuine, honest, and faithful administration is stronger than the developed technology and sophisticated weapons possessed by America, the Zionist entity, and those who stood with them in their aggressive war against Iraq.

AL-QADISIYAH newspaper adds: This epic-like steadfastness of the Iraqis have belied the views of the Western politicians and changed their conviction regarding the Arab individual and his steel will to confront the invaders, fight them, and achieve splendid victory over the invaders and their forces that came from all around the world.

The paper notes that Iraq's sons have revealed their genuine nature and true affiliation to the soil of the dear homeland. The position of pride and dignity which we adopted to repulse the aggression and foil the treacherous, aggressive schemes is a high medal of honor which we are proud of, and which we will leave as a mark on our soil for coming generations will see and think about with love and pride.

Commentary Views U.S. Objectives in Gulf

NC1902125391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1012 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, expressing his opposition to the American aggressive war against Iraq and the barbaric and destructive American methods, the president of one of the Soviet republics said: I am afraid that this will turn into a display of power against us all. Former U.S. President Carter said: Any alternative to peace talks will lead to a long, destructive war that will destroy the alliance and cause instability in the Middle East. Politicians, observers, and analysts from all over the world have identified the objectives of American brute force, the possibilities of using it, and the nature of its use.

The United States is initiating its new policy with aggression and intimidation toward the entire world. The United States is not excluding its Atlantic and other partners from the objectives of its overhandedness. Many states involved in the plot have warned that American hegemony is surfacing as part of the plot itself. The United States used the press, television, and congressional meetings to set the demands and the extent of the required participation. This happened to Germany and Japan.

We do not think that we need to remind anyone of America's treatment of its agents, the Al Sa'ud family. It has become clear that the debauched [word indistinct] should only be milked and not intervene in anything else in the aggressive U.S. plan. Therefore, the American objectives are to occupy the oil fields; milk the billionaires; provide jobs for the unemployed American soldiers who served in Europe; operate weapons and ammunition factories after the recession; guarantee the

Zionist entity and provide it with new aggressive, expansionist reasons; strike at Iraq to destroy its power, which in every sense and by all standards is an Arab-Islamic power possessing the capability to stand in the face of the savage and rancorous onslaught against Arabism and Islam; and terrorize the world and force it to accept the American decision. Otherwise, force, destruction, and assassination will be used against anyone who does not agree.

The American plan is no longer shrouded with secrecy and subject to speculation. It has become a sword brandished on everyone's neck. Those who have not quickly realized the serious dangers have missed out or can offer nothing except words. Is this permissible? Is it permissible for some to feel weak, unable to reject, and unable to participate in forming the barrier which Iraq has begun with rare courage, a barrier which will remain an epitome of victory and greatness for many generations to come? How can Iraq maintain its steadfastness and iron will in the face of 30 states—superpowers, big states, and states of all sizes—despite the weapons and hatred they gathered?

Iraq is leading everyone toward courage, freedom, and honor. A country like this will inevitably score a victory for itself, for the nation, and for entire mankind.

Paper: U.S. Aims To Destroy Iraq, Saddam

NC1902113491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0935 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 19 Feb (INA)—AL-'IRAQ affirms that the objective of the U.S. Administration in the war is not "Kuwait," but the destruction of Iraq and getting rid of Iraq's leader. In today's editorial, the newspaper stresses that this call by Bush and his administration is no more than rattle [taninnan]. And the result of the war will only be America's defeat and political and ethical bankruptcy.

The paper notes that a thorough analysis of the course of events that took place after 2 August 1990 and a pause before the hidden imperialist and Zionist objectives indicate that the real objective of the colonialist campaign led by the United States is not the "liberation of Kuwait." The purpose is much more than this, and more dangerous.

The paper says that the imperialist and Zionist quarters that attempted to cloak its purpose under the cover of "Kuwait" can hide behind this cover for a long time, because its hostile purpose aims at two things, namely the destruction of Iraq and the elimination of [al-qada' 'ala] its leader, Saddam Husayn. And these two objectives were postponed until the set time and hour. The paper adds that the rancor of the imperialist and Zionist quarters against Iraq's prosperity and capability, the builder of this prosperity, and the founder of this capability has not been hidden nor was it the outcome of the 2 August events.

In conclusion, AL-'IRAQ says: Any observer could have recorded this since the victory of the 17 July 1968 revolution. The observer can also record the escalation in the severe hostility after 16 July 1968 [as received] when the leader [Saddam Husayn] occupied the first position in the state and party.

Talk Asserts Cairo Meeting Not Legitimate

NC1902132891 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1101 GMT 19 Feb 91

["A Calm Talk in a Stormy Climate" program]

[Text][passage indistinct] the foreign ministers' meeting that the Husni regime authorities insist on saying that it represents all the Arab countries. This meeting, which was held in Cairo over the past two days, failed this time even to secure the flimsy cover that the media used to impart to the details of the pan-Arab effort undertaken by the head of the Egyptian regime.

At this latest meeting, we find ourselves in front of a dissimilarity evoking mockery and indignation at the same time. This is because the number of countries that took part in this meeting does not exceed three—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, in addition to the Arab Gulf emirates, which move in the orbit of Saudi Arabia and act on its orders.

If we suppose that the foreign ministers of these countries together represent the [words indistinct] public opinion, and that the Arab people in Najd and Hejaz [Saudi Arabia], Egypt, and Syria were clapping their hands for America and its European allied forces as they bombed with their aircraft and missiles Iraqi cities and killed children and women in Baghdad and elsewhere—we say that if those scoundrel ministers represent the actual reality in their countries, then Husni's media authorities will have to answer a question that an observer of this conference has been asking: It is about the fact that the number of the Arab countries in the League that Husni insists on transferring to Cairo by force is 22, not 8, and that there are 14 other countries whose foreign ministers were absent from the meeting. How, then, does this meeting acquire its alleged legitimacy? How can its delegates represent the Arab politial reality and the Arab League? How can the security arrangements that they want to implement—inspired by the U.S. Administration and its armies that invade the Arab land—be Arab arrangements? How can the security arrangements, devised by colonialist Britain and France for the Arab region in the Sykes-Picot agreement, be less harmful to Arab security than the arrangements that the regime of Egypt's ruler is planning at such meetings to conspire against the Arab nation and Arab existence? Where are the cries of anger and heroic deeds with which the Arab masses filled the streets and with which they expressed their denunciation of the new imperialist plot?

How will all this conform to these treasonous regimes' emphasis on the need to implement legality and the UN Security Council resolutions? Why were all the Security

Council resolutions pertaining to Palestine outside of these ministers' minds? Is it not because the U.S. Administration and world Zionism were directing these meetings from behind the scenes, inspiring their resolutions, and drawing up the scenarios related to them in such a way that everything would seem Arab, representing the Arab nation's desire?

Since the 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement and the crime that was precipitated by that agreement, the nation's body has been divided by the imperialists, and the Arabs have languished as a result of a history drawn by others, in which we have witnessed bad times for Arabs in which every kind of forgery and falsehood was condoned and anti-Arab plots became legitimate.

Do Husni and Fahd want to turn back the hands of time and renew [words indistinct] seems to have forced the new British, French, and American colonialists to resuscitate it? Who will bear the responsibility of splitting the Arab ranks and the Arab League? Are they not those who have carried out America's will and lined up with it at Hafar al-Batin to strike an Arab country whose only guilt was that it said no to treason; no to exploitation; no to Arab humiliation; no to trusteeship; no to squandering the nation's wealth to benefit Western interests, servants, brokers, and minions; and no to dividing the world between the rich, who possess everything, and the poor, who have nothing?

Editorial: 'Decisive Days' of Battle Drawing Near

NC2002114091 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0819 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: AL-JUMHURIYAH today writes an editorial headlined "God's strength is an additional strength to our will." The editorial says:

Iraq has an unusual strength, which even the enemies have recognized before the friends. This strength has made it an example of steadfastness and the highest example of readiness in facing adversity and confronting the evil, crimes, and means of treachery and aggression of the largest group of international parties. This group comprises 30 members, ranging from superpower and major ones with weapons and resources to parties with heavy financial weight in the world. The [word indistinct] history of humanity has never seen anything similar to the challenges Iraq is facing, challenges that are accompanied by the vilest savage methods and exposed evil intentions. This evil allied group has not succeeded in imposing its economic measures and its treacherous and aggressive military plans or in weakening Iraq's will, true strength, and firm determination to achieve its objectives and bring about its shining victory.

Iraq has said and continues to say one clear and sincere word through leader of the faithful mujahid Saddam Husayn, and the whole world has heard it. In brief, this word says that Iraq's strength stems from the will of God Almighty; from its great people's faith; from its valiant army's capabilities and [word indistinct] highly efficient individual and collective combat efficiency; from its historic leadership's confidence in this people and this valiant army; from the people's and army's confidence in the united, wise, and experienced leadership; and from the spirit of sacrifices and creativity which the noble Iraqis are endowed with and which has been manifested as an additional strength to the advanced weapons created by the mujahidin and the capabilities that have proved their effectiveness in activating this (?exemplary) steadfastness for more than seven months of the decisive duel with the gathering of blasphemy and aggression.

If the gathering of the imperialist-Zionist-Atlantic infidels believes, on the basis of its abstract computer calculations, that it has more weapons and equipment, that the number of the parties in this gathering is more than any other gathering or alliance, that it is easier for it to implement its expansionist intentions inside the Arab homeland and its destructive intentions, then this barbaric gathering has forgotten to include in its calculations the invisible capabilities and flowering and rejuvenated resources of the Iraqis. It has forgotten to take into account that victory is a spiritual and psychological extension that is deeply entrenched in the souls of the Iraqis. It is an extension linked to the justice of the national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian issues in whose defense they are fighting. They will continue to fight unhesitatingly regardless of the form, size, and tools of the coming (?phases) of the aggression.

The gathering of Bush, his allies, and his insignificant agents has forgotten that millions of faithful and free Arabs, Muslims, and various peoples are rallying and leading the ranks around the banner of Allahu Akbar hoisted by Iraq. These millions have so far shown what effectiveness they have in pursuing the interests of the forces and parties of the satanic hostile alliance. They, like Iraq itself, possess more tools to strike with and factors of strength, which they have prepared to punish the war criminals and those trading in the blood of our people and the peace and security of peoples. Foremost among these criminals are criminal Bush, criminal Shamir, criminal Fahd, criminal Husni, and their ilk.

The decisive days of the great historic duel in the mother of battles are drawing near, together with the date of victory for Iraq and for the gathering of the faithful and good people around it. The defeat of the imperialists, Zionists, and the Arab hypocrites will be a crushing one. God Almighty's will is stronger, and it is the will of right, justice, freedom, and peace to which Iraq's leader, people, and massive Army are committed. It is from this will that Iraq is proceeding toward its sincere objectives of liberating the holy places and resources and breaking the heads of aggressors and their lowly lackeys.

'Sources' Say 'Aziz Assassination Attempt Failed

PM1902180191 London AL-ZAHIRAH in Arabic 18 Feb 91 p1

[Unattributed report: "'Aziz Assassination Attempt Results In Massacre"]

[Excerpt] Tehran, AL-ZAHIRAH exclusive—Informed Western diplomatic sources in the Iranian capital Tehran have revealed that an attempt was made to assassinate Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz during his land journey from Baghdad to the Iranian border, somewhere between the towns of Ba'qubah and al-Miqdadiyah. The attempt took place two hours before 'Aziz arrived in the border town of Khanaqin amidst strict security precautions and accompanied by three armored vehicles. Although Baghdad tried to conceal the news of the attempt on Tariq 'Aziz, the news was later leaked by some of his guards who accompanied him on the trip to Tehran before he boarded the plane which took him to Moscow for a meeting with Soviet Leader Gorbachev. Western diplomatic sources in Tehran confirm that the attempt to assassinate 'Aziz took place on the highway several miles from the village of Jallulah and that it was carried out by a group of Iraqi youths fleeing from compulsory conscription. They add that the attempt on Saddam's foreign minister came at a time of mounting popular wrath at the Iraqi ruler which is being voiced openly for the first time in protest against the destruction an ruination of their country caused by Saddam.

According to the Western diplomatic sources, one of Tariq 'Aziz's personal guards was critically wounded in the assassination attempt. Tariq 'Aziz hurriedly contacted the Republican Guard command in Baghdad by radio from his car and informed it of the attempt on his life. The command promptly sent armored vehicles which encircled Jallulah village and arrested its young people and also broke into homes to arrest mothers, children, and elderly people and opened fire on these people in the village's main square. A large number of youths were taken amidst stringent security measures to al-Nihayah palace for interrogation in order to to get confessions from them under torture and duress.

It is worth noting that yesterday's attempt to assassinate Tariq 'Aziz was the second. The first was in 1980, some months before the outbreak of the Iraq-Iran war when he was information minister. 'Aziz exploited that fact to get closer to Saddam who later made him foreign minister and deputy prime minister. The Iraqi authorities fear the increasing popular anger which has recently begun to manifest itself in the streets following the succcess of the Desert Storm air raids in destroying strategic targets. The Iraqi people on the streets say the Iraqis have been drawn into a Saddam war [once again] after eight years of a vicious war against Iran.

Republican Guard Troops Allegedly Deserting

LD1902195591 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1837 GMT 19 Feb 91

[By Charles Miller, PRESS ASSOCIATION defense correspondent]

[Text] Troops from Saddam Husayn's loyal Republican Guard Force are starting to desert, military sources disclosed tonight.

The news will be a severe blow to Iraq's military leaders, who are replying on the guard units as the elite of the Iraqi Army to launch counter-penetration strikes when the allies launch a ground war.

The 150,000-strong force, which forms Iraq's strategic reserve in northern Kuwait and southern Iraq, has been subjected to constant aerial bombardment for the past three weeks.

The allies view the Republican Guard as posing the greatest threat in a land battle. They are the best-educated, best-equipped and best-trained of Iraq's fighting units. They were originally established to protect the Iraqi leader and, like him, are all Sunni Muslims.

Sources said news that Republican Guard soldiers were leaving their posts would, therefore, have a particularly severe impact on the morale of other army units. The information comes from deserters from regular Iraqi Army units who have surrendered to the allies on the Saudi border.

No Republican Guard troops have so far handed themselves over to allied forces. According to sources, they are deserting north back into Iraq to seek refuge with friends. One senior source said of the guards' desertion rate: "It is increasing as the number of desertions increases overall."

The Iraqis have formed special squads among the front-line forces to prevent desertions across the border. And sources said there were stories of troops opening fire on "death squads." There are increasing reports of troops failing to return to their posts from courses or short periods of leave. And because of the difficulty of deserting over the Saudi border, "quite a lot" are moving back into Iraq.

The overall picture is one of an army gradually disintegrating under an aerial blitz as they realise they face certain defeat. "It is an army which is having a great deal of difficulty keeping the lid on," said one source. "There have been stories of disputes leading to a breakdown of discipline." However, the allies do not underestimate the remaining forces of the Republican Guard, which they believe could still put up a stubborn fight in a ground battle. Significantly, allied commanders continually refuse to give estimates of the amount of damage inflicted specifically on the guard's divisions.

10 Officials Said Killed During 'Mass' Protest

AU1902093891 Vienna KURIER in German 19 Feb 91 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Officials Killed During Demonstration Against Saddam"]

[Text] During protest demonstrations against Saddam Husayn in Iraq, 10 officials of the ruling Ba'th Party have allegedly been killed. Travelers spoke of mass demonstrations against Saddam's war policy.

In al-Diwaniyah, 180 km south of Baghdad, 5,000 people allegedly took to the street. Functionaries who wanted to impede the demonstration were attacked by the angry crowd. Ten officials were killed by shots, some of them were injured, and two were allegedly mutilated. However, according to these reports, there are "no signs" of an "uprising of the people."

Former Minister Urges Opposition To 'Close Ranks'

LD1902192991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 19 Feb (SPA)—Former Iraqi Defense Minister Staff Major General Ibrahim al-Dawud called on the Iraqi opposition to close ranks, make efforts to clarify the facts, and explain the suffering through which the Iraqi people are going under the regime of the criminal Saddam Husayn.

In an article in the magazine AL-YAMAMAH, which will appear tomorrow, Wednesday, he said: Let our supreme and major objective be to save Iraq and its people and to set up a free regime that can restore to the people their rights and liberties usurped by Saddam.

He said that Saddam was aware from the outset of this opposition—hence the carefully planned and studied plot that he began to implement. [passage omitted]

Staff Maj. Gen. Ibrahim al-Dawud said that the ruling regime carried out the physical liquidation of opponents inside Iraq—arbitrarily against various factions of scholars and patriotic individuals.

He also talked about the attitude of the head of the Iraqi regime toward the Iraqi opposition abroad. He underlined that the Baghdad regime had two methods: First, to pursue opposition members everywhere, and kill whoever is caught or return them to Iraq in crates after having been drugged. Second, through planting informers among opposition circles who pose as businessmen or holders of high university degrees opposed to the Iraqi regime—when in actual fact they are its agents, their task being to gather information on the opposition and spread doubts about its members.

Jordan's Husayn 'Willing' To Negotiate After War

TA2002074191 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Feb 91 p A1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] King Husayn has announced his intention to rejoin the peace process as soon as the Gulf war is over. U.S. figures who visited Amman this week and held extensive talks with the monarch reported upon their arrival in Jerusalem that King Husayn wants to return to the front of the political stage and not be led by Egypt.

According to the king, he would be willing to enter negotiations with Israel under the auspices of an international umbrella, as specified in the London agreement of April 1987. Husayn said he was encouraged by the fact that Israel did not take advantage of the war in the Gulf to invade Jordan and realize the notion of "Jordan is Palestine." The monarch noted that he expects the United States and the European countries to take his country's serious domestic situation into account and help him out of the serious political and economic crisis. He complained that for years the West had treated him as if it had him in its pocket and had disregarded his aid requests. The Gulf crisis showed that the options open to other countries in the Middle East are also open to Jordan, the Jordanian monarch stated. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Reactions to USSR Peace Offer

Foreign Ministry Official Comments

TA1902160191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav by Gay Zohar and Ya'el Dan on 19 February 1991—recorded]

[Text] [Merhav] The war is being conducted by a coalition, and we are not immediate partners to it. I would suggest—or we should ask ourselves—that we view things in the light in which developments occur; namely, in the correct proportions. We have a serious enemy who threatened us; a large coalition is fighting him, pounding him, and eroding his military capability after having earlier exhausted all the political paths in a sincere effort to reach a settlement. This settlement did not come about, and so every day that passes, every bridge that is blown up there, and every tank that is shredded equals a slightly lesser strategic threat to Israel. This is where things stand right now.

[Dan] The question is what will happen if Saddam Husayn says yes to Gorbachev's initiative, which means, to the best of our knowledge, that Saddam Husayn will escape alive and his regime will be left intact. What are the implications of this for Israel?

[Merhav] Saddam Husayn is a veteran survivor. For eight years he fought against Iran, shedding the blood of thousands on both sides of the border; he survived and eventually even grew stronger. If he had accepted the coalition's terms or the Security Council resolutions on 15 January, he would today have been out of Kuwait and survived with all his military strength plus an additional pretext. Today we know the truth: His military strength has been severely eroded, the Iraqi people are very irate, and there are serious complications in the area. I would, therefore, very much like to see things in the right light. Things have not yet ended.

[Dan] And you still have not replied to our question: Should Gorbachev's initiative be accepted, will we find ourselves in a very tough situation?

[Zohar] In other words, should Israel rise and say publicly—perhaps even now through this interview with you—how dangerous it would be to accept compromise proposals such as this?

[Merhav] I repeat: Only four and a half weeks ago we could have been in a far graver predicament. What has happened in the interim? His ability to attack us has shrunk considerably, and our strategic situation in terms of the threat is definitely better today than four and a half weeks ago.

[Dan] What you are saying is that, from our standpoint it would not be so bad if....

[Merhav, interrupting] I did not say it would not be bad. Certainly it would be preferable, from our standpoint, if Saddam's war machine were completely crushed. I would like us to recall that the ones who should be most interested in this are his neighbors, three of which have already had a taste of his potential. They will undoubtedly make sure that his military capability is even further eroded. Thus, for the moment we are in a situation in which others are fighting a large part of our war. We are aware of the political sensibilities and if things continue like this, no doubt the result will not be the strengthening of Saddam Husayn but the opposite. We should welcome this.

[Dan] Do you believe that Gorbachev's proposal is or will be acceptable to Bush?

[Merhav] I do not know; I think the U.S. President, who garnered backing for himself in Congress, the international community, and the United Nations, among closer and more distant allies, certainly knows that the great sacrifice—human and economic—that has been made by the greater coalition in general and the United States in particular cannot end in allowing the regional hooligan to remain in power with his entire military power unharmed. Thus, I believe the Americans will no doubt have something to say about the matter.

I imagine the Soviets will not want to wash their hands completely of the Middle East theater, where they have been very active for many years. They said themselves that 500 km south of the USSR border a great war is

being waged, one which could have far-reaching implications for that country's southern border. They want their voice to be heard.

[Zohar] The Soviet Union is, in fact, definitely making efforts to have its voice heard, and possibly even emerge diplomatically victorious from this battle.

[Merhav] I think the influential forces in the USSR are not uniform; I think that certain elements in the Soviet Union have a very strong interest in preserving their say and in keeping channels for the export of technology and weapons open. The final word has not yet been said. It is very obvious to the Soviet Union and the people there—from the little we know—that they can hardly welcome a situation in which, after having played such a crucial role in the Middle East arena, they virtually disappear. It is in their interest to maintain some status there.

Soviet Official on Expected Iraqi Reply

TA1902144491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1305 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Report on interview with Robert Markaryan, senior aide to Soviet envoy Yevgeniy Primakov, by foreign affairs news editor Gid'on Remez—comments by Markaryan, in quotation marks, are recorded in Russian, followed by Hebrew translation read by Remez]

[Text] The possible return of Tariq 'Aziz to Moscow even before he hand-carried the Soviet plan to Saddam Husayn—that was news an hour ago for the senior aide to Yevgeniy Primakov, the Soviet envoy who had conceived of the plan. This aide, Robert Markaryan—an orientalist in background, like Primakov—participated in Primakov's talks with Saddam Husayn in Baghdad over the weekend as well as in the talks with Tariq 'Aziz in Moscow yesterday. He was surprised when Isabela Ginor from our studio told him that Tariq 'Aziz is indeed on his way back from Tehran already.

"We expected the answer to be rather quick since the Iraqi leadership clearly understood that it does not have much time to waste, but anything is possible."

In your opinion, is this rapid answer, if it is indeed given, an indication of a decision by the Iraqi leadership, and what is the nature of this decision?

"We are hinging hopes on that; let us wait and see."

Still, Primakov's aide wanted to stress to the Israeli public that during Primakov's meeting with Saddam Husayn in Baghdad, as well as when previous Soviet proposals were raised and in yesterday's talks in Moscow, the USSR made clear its opposition to Iraq's firing of missiles at Israel and its attempt to get Israel involved in the war through this, which has caused civilian casualties in Israel. According to Markaryan, who probably also expresses the opinion of his superior, Primakov, and Primakov's superior, Gorbachev, it will be impossible to end this war in the Gulf if Iraq continues to launch missiles at Israel.

"This war has to end also with guarantees for Israel's safety, and this was made absolutely clear in the talks both in Baghdad and in Moscow."

What was your impression of Saddam Husayn in those talks in Baghdad? You were, after all, present for those talks. Also, reports in the West indicate that he is a desperate, pressured man who does not receive serious reports on what is taking place in his own country and among his troops. Do you think these reports are well-based?

"Well, to me Saddam seemed calm and self-confident. It seemed that he is in control, sure of himself as well as of the situation; at least he does not give the impression of a person who is at all desperate."

Jerusalem 'Pleased' With Bush Rejection

TA1902191891 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1912 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Jerusalem is pleased with President Bush's rejection of the Soviet initiative. The Foreign Ministry says that Iraq should not be allowed to turn its military defeat into a victory or a political achievement.

Arens on Israeli Intelligence, USSR Peace Offer

TA1902150791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens says that intelligence organs will have to do some soul-searching after the war. He talked to reporters in the Knesset, as our correspondent Dov Gilhar reports:

[Begin recording] [Gilhar] Mr. Minister, you used the term soul-searching. Usually that term is restricted to expressions of dissatisfaction with certain acts. Members of the committee [not further specified] have narrowed their criticism down to assessment, not intelligence information. Are you pleased with the intelligence assessments that you were given?

[Arens] I think that our assessments were good, but everything is relative when we talk about intelligence assessments. I do not believe it would be an exaggeration to say that the Israeli intelligence assessments were better than those of other elements. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1345 GMT on 19 February carries additional excerpts from Arens' remarks, in which he says: "Our intelligence is excellent." Compared to "other intelligence bodies in the world," he adds, "we will not find ourselves in last place; it may even transpire that we are in first place."]

[Gilhar] Still, intelligence did not predict the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, to mention one instance. This is something that has already become common knowledge.

[Arens] We do not ask intelligence to be prophetic. I normally do not ask our intelligence what will happen; I ask it what could happen. Our intelligence definitely

took into consideration the possibility that Iraq might invade Kuwait or that it might engage in a different aggressive operation after its war with Iran ended. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1345 GMT on 19 February adds, in a report by Knesset correspondent Ze'ev Kohen, that Defense Minister Arens says that since his return from the United States "I have noticed greater U.S. activity in western Iraq compared to the days prior to my visit. This is the reason for the decline in Iraq's ability to launch missiles." Asked about USSR diplomatic activity toward arranging an end to the hostilities, Arens says: "The Soviets are apparently trying to provide Saddam Husayn with a tall ladder with which to climb down from the tree. It is hard for me to assess Saddam Husayn's reaction or behavior. I do not think President Bush will give up the terms he set at the beginning of the war." Kohen adds that with respect to the soul-searching in the intelligence community, Arens focused specifically on its ability to identify Iraq's "immense military prowess" before the war. Kohen cites Arens as saying that "they have great conventional power and a wide nonconventional infrastructure. To boot, it has taken the Americans and their allies one month to bombard Iraq, and there is still work to be done. Saddam Husayn, too, in certain respects, proved a man whom the Americans, for one, have failed to deter." Kohen also reports that Arens said about the Palestinian question that "it will not run away. The 1.5 million Palestinians are a problem we will have to tackle, but I am not sure new initiatives are necessary. The May 1989 initiative is good enough, and in any case, we will not sit down with the PLO around the negotiating table."]

On Iraqi Military, Territories Policy

TA1902184791 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Eli Nisan on 19 February in the Knesset—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] [Nisan] Sir, what is your reaction to the Soviet proposal to bring about the termination of hostilities in the Gulf and an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait?

[Arens] I have not seen the specifics of the Soviet proposal, but I did see the terms and goals set by President Bush. I think the Iraqis will have to accept these goals before the war ends.

[Nisan] Would Israel take a negative view of the end of the war now, under the present circumstances?

[Arens] The question is not whether Israel feels uncomfortable with that or not; the question is whether Saddam Husayn will accept the terms which were set by President Bush in the clearest way possible.

[Nisan] How will Israel view the acceptance of the terms without the destruction of Iraq's arsenal?

[Arens] First of all, a large part of the arsenal Iraq had before the war, which is to say about a month ago, no longer exists.

[Nisan] One month after the beginning of military operations against Iraq are you surprised about Iraq's ability to withstand the waves of aerial bombardments?

[Arens] Not at all; the aerial attack that has been continuing for a month destroys a part of the Iraqi military capability every day. They are unable to defend themselves against this or do anything about it.

[Nisan] Mr. Arens, do you still believe that Israel should react to the Iraqi attacks on Israel?

[Arens] I have said on various occasions that in the right circumstances and at the right time we will announce what we will do.

[Nisan] You told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that there is room for some soul-searching in the intelligence service. What did you mean, sir?

[Arens] I said that after an incident such as war in Iraq, we—like every other nation in the world—will have to engage in some soul-searching and reassessment.

[Nisan] Do you think both ours and Western intelligence were somewhat deficient?

[Arens] No, on the contrary. I said that in my not-so-humble opinion, our intelligence assessments were the best in the world.

[Nisan] As for the territories: Part of the educational system there resumed activity today. Under the present circumstances, seeing that the war in the Gulf is still continuing, can you foresee life in the territories—specifically the educational system—returning to normal?

[Arens] We will try to achieve that to the extent possible, hoping that it will not lead to disturbances. If disturbances should occur, there will be no alternative but to go back to the policy of curfews and the closure of schools.

Iraqi Scud Missile Attack Reported 19 Feb

Fired From Western Iraq

NC1902181591 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1804 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] The Israeli Defense Force [IDF] spokesman said a short while ago that the missile that was fired from western Iraq at Israel a short while ago has landed. The IDF is currently taking the necessary measures. All population of the country must remain in their tightly sealed rooms with their anti-chemical gas masks on and continue to listen to the radio and the IDF spokesman's statements.

An IDF spokesman promised that he will provide us all details on the missile landing shortly.

No Information on Casualties, Damage

TA1902183191

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Voice of Israel and IDF Radio Network in Hebrew at 1820 GMT on 19 February carries a telephone interview with Army spokesman Brigadier General Nahman Shay, giving permission for the residents of the Heh region—the central region excluding Jerusalem and Tel Aviv—to remove their gas masks but asking them to still remain in the sealed rooms. Shay reports that "we do not know, no information has reached us or the other emergency teams, on damage, and certainly not about casualties."

Uninhabited Area Hit, Patriots Fired

TA1902191291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] A Scud missile was launched this evening from western Iraq toward Israel. Patriot missiles were launched against the Scud. There has been no report of casualties or damage so far. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the missile had a conventional warhead and fell in an uninhabited area in the center of the country. This is the 15th attack since the beginning of the war, and 36 missiles have landed in Israel's territory so far.

Adviser on Scud Remnants, Cooperation With U.S.

TA1902212991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2010 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Telephone interview with Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, by 'Amiqam Rothman—live]

[Text] [Rothman] Good day to you, Dani Nave. Do you know about the beginning of the allied forces' offensive, preparations for it perhaps?

[Nave] We do not have information on this issue except for media reports which are flowing in from the Gulf now, and which you have also reported. At the same time, it seems that President Bush is determined to pursue the plan he has decided upon. He is not impressed by the diplomatic proposals for the time being. The Americans set a number of clear goals for themselves, and they will not allow Saddam Husayn to slip through without having these conditions fulfilled. At any event, we in Israel have received more proof that the war is still going on, and all thoughts that Saddam Husayn wants or is already prepared for peace have been disproved with the missile launched this evening. This serves as more proof that Saddam Husayn is continuing with terrorism and violence against a civilian population.

[Rothman] Incidentally, as far as this missile is concerned, have its remnants been found yet?

[Nave] To the best of my knowledge, yes.

[Rothman] The Americans today reported hits of six launchers. So again, have they hit 600 [as heard] launchers out of the existing 200?

[Nave] Regrettably, I cannot continue to joke with you on this matter, since this is a serious problem indeed. We have reports we have not been able to confirm. We have an assessment regarding the number of mobile launchers which have been hit and rendered inoperable in west Iraq. This assessment indicates that a considerable number of the mobile launchers in west Iraq are still intact and can still fire missiles at Israel. The evidence for this was delivered this evening and this past Saturday evening. We know that this past week the Americans have accelerated their activity in west Iraq. There have been more sorties, more U.S. activity there, and we definitely appreciate this. At the same time though, this threat has not been eliminated yet. Defense Minister Arens this evening met with a group of senators, led by Senators Inouye and Sam Nunn, who had just arrived from Saudi Arabia, and it was only a short while after he completed a description of the situation in west Iraq as well as the situation which the Israeli citizens are facing at sunset every night, that the alarm was sounded. The senators then had first-hand exposure to the feelings experienced by Israel's citizens every evening, and I believe that they will relay this unpleasant personal experience to Washington.

[Rothman] Have they said as much?

[Nave] Yes. They said this was better than any explanation, to experience personally that feeling to which every Israeli citizen is subjected, especially in the Tel Aviv area, in the center of the country, where the meeting took place.

[Rothman] Dani Nave, is there any coordination, are there daily contacts with the U.S. security authorities?

[Nave] There have been continuing contacts between the Israeli defense establishment, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], and people in the Pentagon and various branches of the U.S. Army since the Gulf war began. These contacts, this cooperation, has increased daily. Today we are satisfied with this daily communication which exists between Israelis and Americans. I believe this communication has already made a contribution regarding the threat to us and Iraq's capability of hitting us. I can only hope this communication will grow even stronger.

[Rothman] Thank you, Dani Nave, the defense minister's adviser.

Peres Discusses Need for Political Process

TA1902201991 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Labor Party Chairman Shim'on Peres says that the time at Israel's disposal is running out and that Israel

should substitute a political process for military confrontation. Mr. Peres was also doubtful about the success the Soviet initiative will meet with. He appeared today before members of the economic club in Jerusalem, and Mira Amsalem reports on his remarks.

[Begin recording] [Amsalem] It is the Americans who lead all moves in this war, Shim'on Peres told the economic club members. Peres expressed his satisfaction with these moves, as well as with the stance of the United States which prevented Israel from participating in the coalition. The only invitation to take part in the war, Peres said, reached us from Baghdad, but there is another kind of coalition which we must be part of.

[Peres] Still, if the war ends and the [Israeli-Arab] conflict lasts; if the war coalition dissolves—without us, since we are not a member thereof—and a coalition for peace in the Middle East forms, without us, again, we shall then pay a heavy price. [Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic at 1700 GMT on 19 February also reports on Peres' appearance, quoting him as adding, in Hebrew, that "if the conflict continues, so will the arms race. I am proposing to have increased political wisdom; the United States—with the largest army worldwide—understood this is necessary, and so should we. We must enter a political process now. A delay will be at our expense. A delay in fact enables the Arab world and others to enlist all forces against us."]

[Amsalem] Peres stressed that the time at our disposal is running out, and within a year it will be necessary to launch a political process in which King Husayn and Jordan will participate as well as a Palestinian delegation according to the proposal of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. These talks, Peres made clear anew, will be conducted in the framework of an international conference.

As for the talks in the Soviet Union, Peres does not believe the Soviet initiative will succeed.

[Peres] In my opinion, the Soviet initiative stands no chance, unless it is compatible with U.S. demands. This is a war which is run by the Americans, and it is they who will terminate it, too. In my opinion, if the Iraqis do not accept all U.S. conditions, no cease-fire will be reached.

[Amsalem] According to Peres' assessment, the ground battle will start if Iraq does not surrender, and it will proceed differently than what we expect. Peres believes that the fighting forces will grind the Iraqis to dust. [end recording]

Air Force Attacks 'Terrorist' Base in Lebanon

TA2002085591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0845 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Report by military correspondent Amir Fink]

[Text] This morning, Air Force planes attacked a terrorist base in the al-Biqa' region of southern Lebanon, south of al-Sultan Ya'qub. The target was destroyed and our aircraft returned safely to base. The target served as a point of departure for attacks on Israel.

This is the second Air Force attack since the Gulf war began and the third this year. The previous air attack was approximately two weeks ago, on 5 February, when Fatah-'Arafat bases east of Sidon were attacked.

Alignment Decides Against No-Confidence Motions

TA1802164991 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Excerpts] In spite of Chairman Shim'on Peres' objection, the Alignment today decided to refrain from submitting no-confidence motions in the government. Faction members decided that it is more important to maintain unity, even though they all shared the view that the government's performance is deficient. Our Knesset correspondent Dov Gilhar reports:

The Alignment adopted the government's tactics and employed a policy of restraint. It is very tempting to react to the crisis with the United States, as well as to the Shamir-Levi feud, and to probe the background for the instruction Zalman Shoval had received. Nonetheless, and against Shim'on Peres' views, the faction decided today to hold its fire. By a majority of 14 against eight, the faction adopted the opinion represented by Hagay Merom, deciding that the time is not yet ripe for no-confidence motions. [passage omitted]

The Alignment leveled harsh criticism of the home front's preparedness for war, particularly as far as bomb shelters are concerned. It seems, however, that this criticism will continue to be heard in private, not in the Knesset plenum.

Political Group Urges Creation of Pro-Iraq Front

NC2002160791 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 Feb 91 p 4

[Text] Amman—The political forces group has called for mobilizing all the forces that are still outside the camp of the alliance, which is waging an aggressive war against Iraq and the Arab nation; for promoting the popular and official Arab position; for raising the level of preparedness and confrontation; and for continuing the war to force the enemies to accept the conditions included in the just Iraqi initiative.

In a statement they issued to mark the passage of one month of the imperialist-Zionist aggression against Iraq, these forces called for stepping up support for Iraq and participating in the battle of confrontation against the aggressive alliance by boycotting the interests and goods of the states of aggression and setting up the widest possible popular and official Arab, Islamic, and international front to confront the aggression.

The statement affirms that the developments, which have taken place since 2 August last year and until now, have exposed the imperialist-Zionist plan to entrench subservience and fragmentation, to directly control our Arab nation's destinies, and to try to build a new international order in which American imperialism can play a major role.

The statement also urges the Arab solution states to sever diplomatic relations with the United States and Britain.

These forces are: The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party (the Unified Organization), the Jordanian Progressive Party, the Jordanian Democratic Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, the Arab Dusturian Front, the Arab Unionist Democratic Party, and the popular committees of the Jordanian National Democratic Party.

Parliamentary Delegation's Pakistan Visit Postponed

NC1802205491 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Excerpts] A joint Jordanian-Palestinian parliamentary delegation led by Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sayih, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has postponed a visit to Pakistan to discuss the Gulf war. The visit was due to take place today. Our colleague Suhayl Khuri had this telephone interview with Shaykh al-Sayih:

[Begin recording] [Khuri] Your Eminence, the visit by the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation led by you was scheduled to leave for Pakistan today, but the visit has been postponed. What is your comment?

[Al-Sayih] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our envoy in Pakistan telephoned me this morning and told me he had informed the Pakistani Foreign Ministry of the visit, the names of the delegation members, and its aim. Several hours later, the Foreign Ministry got in touch and apologized for not meeting the delegation at this time and said that it will contact us again to explain the postponement. The Pakistani ambassador [in Amman] contacted me today and apologized for the unforeseen reasons and said that they will inform me when these reasons have disappeared so we can go ahead with the visit.

[Khuri] Did he not tell you the reasons for postponing the visit?

[Al-Sayih] It seems that there was a misunderstanding between the Pakistani Foreign Ministry and the PNC here. They did not coordinate the timing. Therefore, the visit could not be made because the Pakistani Parliament's engagements made the visit impossible, even though all members of the delegation had obtained visas from the Pakistani Embassy. [passage omitted]

[Khuri] Does this mean that your scheduled visit to Turkey has been postponed, too?

[Al-Sayih] We wanted to visit Turkey immediately after our visit to Pakistan. As the visit to Pakistan has been postponed, we preferred to postpone the visit to Turkey so as to make the two visits consecutively soon, God willing. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Five Nationals Said Killed in Baghdad 'Shelter'

JN1902122091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 Feb 91 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Five Jordanians, all members of one family, were among the victims of al-'Amiriyah shelter massacre in Baghdad when missiles fired by the U.S. Air Force blasted the shelter Wednesday. The Jordanian victims, who were all female, included a 45-year-old mother, 'Adibah Ahmad 'Amir, and her four daughters, Ghadah (21), 'Abir (20), Ghayda' (19) and Rana (14). The husband, Muhammad Khadir, who is a professor at an Iraqi university, and their teenage son survived the inferno that engulfed the civilian shelter. The latest figures released by Iraqi officials said 314 bodies have been retrieved from the wreckage of the shelter, most of them women and children.

Islamic Medical Team, Food Supplies Sent to Iraq

JN1902121191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 Feb 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (PETRA)—An International Islamic Medical Relief Organisation team left Amman for Baghdad Sunday to provide assistance to the civilian victims of the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq.

Lower House of Parliament Member 'Ali al-Hawamidah, who is also director of the Islamic Hospital in Amman, said the team comprises five surgeons and four medical technicians. He said 17 trucks loaded with medicines, baby milk, food supplies and medical equipment were sent to Iraq with the mission.

The team, al-Hawamidah said, would stay in Baghdad from one to four weeks, depending on the developments in the situation. Arrangements for the team to work in one of

Baghdad's large hospitals were made by the Iraqi health ministry and Red Crescent Society, according to al-Hawamidah.

The Amman-based International Islamic Medical Relief Organisation which was established recently will send other medical teams to Iraq in cooperation with the Islamic Hospital, he said.

The organisation was established to provide assistance to victims of natural disasters and wars.

Team Arrives in Baghdad

NC2002112691 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1000 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad, 20 Feb (PETRA)—A Jordanian medical team has arrived in Baghdad, bringing with it food and medical supplies donated by the Islamic Medical Relief Association and the Islamic Hospital in Amman. Similar consignments donated by Jordanian charity organizations and mosques have also arrived here.

Problem of Refugees at Iraqi Border Resolved

JN1902120091 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 Feb 91 p 2

[By staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Excerpt] Amman—The problem of around 2,500 Gulf war refugees—most of them Egyptian nationals—stranded at the Iraqi border for weeks without a special exit permit has been resolved and about 1,800 of them have already crossed into Jordan, Jordanian and international relief officials said Monday.

About 1,400 Egyptians arrived at the al-Ruwayshid border post by Sunday evening, and 950 of them were directly driven to al-'Aqabah for the ferry home, while the rest stayed overnight at a camp set up by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) before heading for home, said Worner Caspar [name as published], the chief ICRC delegate in Jordan.

Another 300 Egyptians passed through al-Ruwayshid to al-'Aqabah Sunday and 50 remained at the ICRC camp by Monday evening awaiting their turn to be transported to the Red Sea port, he said.

"It appears that the problem has been resolved," said Mr. Caspar, recalling that the ICRC had been sending food and relief supplies to the stranded penniless refugees at Tirbil since the last week of January. "There are very few people left at Tirbil now," he told the JORDAN TIMES.

The problem at Tirbil developed after Iraq introduced a new system under which every expatriate leaving the country should possess a special permit issued by the Ministry of Interior in Baghdad. Most of those at the border did have an exit visa issued earlier but it was no longer accepted by Iraqi border officials.

Many refugees undertook the perilous journey back to Baghdad to secure the special permit, braving the continuous allied air attacks against vehicles on the highway. But many others either did not have the means to afford a trip or could not find enough fuel for a return journey after the Iraqi government introduced rationing.

There was no immediate credible explanation as to how the problem was resolved at the border; whether Iraq waived the requirement of the special permit.

"We have been told to expect a few hundred people more from Tirbil by Tuesday," said a border official. [passage omitted]

More Palestinians Allowed Into Occupied Areas

NC2002143191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 20 Feb 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Israeli authorities started allowing 400 Palestinians to cross the King Husayn and Prince Muhammad bridges on the River Jordan on a daily basis as of Wednesday on their way back to the occupied Arab territories according to an announcement by the Public Security Department (PSD).

The announcement which said that 200 would be allowed across each of the bridges, followed long delay imposed by the Israelis on travellers to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip over the past four weeks.

Thousands of Palestinians have been stranded in Jordan after leaving Kuwait and other Gulf countries due to the ban imposed by Israel for what it said was security reasons following the imposition of a blanket curfew on the occupied territories.

The Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry said that around 5,000 Palestinians, most of them penniless and homeless, were affected by the ban. The department said that it was holding intensive contacts with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation to ensure their return to their homeland.

Ratib 'Amir from the Department of Palestinian Afairs said in a statement Monday that at leat 30 Palestinians have lost their residency permits due to the delay, and that meant they can not go back to the occupied homeland.

These Palestinians have been issued these permits by the Israeli authorities upon leaving the occupied territories, and once the permits expire, their holders can not go back home, 'Amir said in his statement.

Representatives of the stranded Palestinians staged two protest marches in Amman during this month, one of which was held Monday, during which the protesters marched to the ICRC and United Nations offices in Amman demanding that they be allowed to return.

Normally, the Israelis allow more than 1,000 persons to cross into the West Bank every day by this time of the year, rising to more than 3,000 during the summer; but they have reduced the number in the past four weeks to less than 50 a day.

Israeli Planes Raid PFLP-GC Headquarters

NC2002092391 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0904 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] There has been an Israeli raid against a Palestinian faction in western al-Biqa'. We have just received an urgent REUTER dispatch citing security sources as saying that Israeli warplanes raided the headquarters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] in western al-Biqa'. The sources added that the Israeli warplanes fired 12 missiles at the headquarters. There are no details yet about the raid or its results.

[Paris AFP in English at 0858 GMT on 20 February adds in a Rashayya-datelined item, "Two Israeli fighter-bombers early Wednesday attacked a position in central Lebanon held by a pro-Libyan Palestinian group, security sources in the region reported. They said the mid-morning raid targeted a base in the village of Kamid al-Lawz in the Western al-Biqa' Valley" and adds "the Israeli planes fired a dozen air-to-ground missiles against the base, sending up a column of black smoke." AFP also says, "The base was located several kilometers from territory controlled by the Syrian army."]

Three Reported Injured

NC2002122291 Paris AFP in English 1120 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Rashayya, Lebanon, Feb 20 (AFP)—Three people were hurt Wednesday when two Israeli fighter-bombers launched a missile attack on a Palestinian position in central Lebanon, regional security sources reported.

In Israel a military spokesman confirmed the raid, describing the target as "a terrorist base in the al-Biqa' Valley ... that has been used as a springboard for attacks on Israel."

He said the position had been destroyed and that all aircraft had returned safely from the mission.

Security sources in Lebanon said the mid-morning attack with air-to-ground missiles was aimed at a facility held by the Syrian-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) in the village of Kamid al-Lawz.

The base was empty at the time of the raid, according to security sources, who put the casualty toll at three wounded, two Palestinian combatants and one Lebanese civilian.

Abu-al-'Aynayn, PFLP spokesman in the region, said the attack "will not prevent the continuation of actions by armed Palestinians against Israel from southern Lebanon."

"The Palestinian struggle will intensify at a time when the people of Iraq are being massacred by the United States," he warned.

Wednesday's strike was the fourth against southern Lebanon by Israel this year, three of which have targeted Palestinian bases.

Lahd Position Attacked by Antitank Missiles

NC2002105191 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] An agent militia position at Bra'shit came under antitank missile attack at dawn today, according to security sources in the South. An ensuing clash continued for about an hour. The number of militia casualities was not known. The militias fired about 30 field artillery shells at areas around the position.

French, Italian Nationals Reportedly Kidnapped

NC2002071091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] AL-DIYAR reports that two foreigners were kidnapped in the Southern Suburb [of Beirut] last week by unidentified gunmen. The paper adds that the two foreigners are French and Italian nationals. Reports say that they have probably been moved outside Beirut.

Israeli Planes Stage Mock Raids in South

NC1902201391 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Israeli warplanes staged mock raids this evening over the regions of Sidon and Iqlim al-Kharrub launching scores of flares.

VOL on Israeli Overflights 18 Feb

NC1902081191 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] All last night, Israeli warplanes overflew Tyre and the areas to the east of Sidon, Iqlim al-Tuffah, and the mountain, dropping flash bombs. Yesterday Israeli warplanes overflew Tyre, while Israeli artillery shelled Wadi al-Hujayr, near the security zone.

This coincided with the entry by the Lebanese Army units into the town of Mlikh in Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Al-Asad, Hashemi-Rafsanjani Talk by Telephone

NC1902213891 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad held a telephone conversation with Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today. Their discussion centered on the situation in the Gulf and the efforts being undertaken to end the difficult situation through which the region is passing. The two presidents stressed their concern for Iraq and their desire to put an end to this painful situation. They expressed the hope that Iraq will make a decision to withdraw from Kuwait, because this will serve the interest of everyone in Iraq, Kuwait, and the other countries of the region. The two presidents agreed to continue their contacts.

Cabinet Discusses Gulf, Talas Moscow Visit

NC2002132691 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Damascus—The Council of Ministers met at 1100 today under Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. During this meeting, a political review was held. General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, briefed the council on the positive results of his visit and talks in the USSR.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' also submitted a report on the latest developments on the Gulf crisis, the positive results of the meeting of the Syrian and Egyptian foreign ministers, and the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers in Cairo.

The council also discussed several draft decrees and laws and other matters that have been referred to it and made the necessary decisions about them.

Baghdad Radio Cited on Missile Fired 19 Feb

NC2002063491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Baghdad Radio has announced that Iraq fired a missile at 2000 yesterday against the occupied Arab territories. News agencies reported from occupied Palestine that the missile landed near the 'En Gedi area in occupied Palestine and that no casualties were reported.

Al-Shar' Returns From Cairo Meeting 17 Feb

NC1702064591 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned in Damascus last night, having participated in the meetings of the foreign ministers of Syria, Egypt, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The meetings were held in Cairo on 15 and 16 February 1991. Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egypt's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, senior Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials, the Syrian ambassador to Cairo, and the Egyptian ambassador to Damascus saw al-Shar' off to the airport.

Al-Shar' Confers With Algerian Legislator

NC1802064191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' yesterday received Abdelaziz Belkhadem, speaker of the Algerian National Assembly, also in attendance were Shakir Is'ayyid, chairman of the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee at the People's Assembly, and the Algerian ambassador in Damascus.

The two sides exchanged views on the Gulf crisis, its developments and scope for solution. The two sides also reviewed relations between the two sisterly countries, Syria and Algeria.

The speaker of the Algerian National Assembly expressed Algeria's interest in intensifying contacts and consultations with Syria to end the Gulf crisis on the basis of Iraq's unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and saving the Iraqi and Kuwaiti people from further tribulation and destruction.

Al-Shar', Information Minister Address Assembly

NC2002090091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has stressed that Syria supports the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region, based on Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the guarantee of the Palestinian people's national and inalienable rights. Syria, he added, rejects partial settlements and calls for convening an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

In a statement he delivered to the People's Assembly, Faruq al-Shar' talked about the principles of Syria's policy, and said those principles, built by President Hafiz al-Asad through his farsightedness and able wisdom, have enabled our people and army to maintain and defend them in all circumstances and under all developments.

Al-Shar' referred to the Iraq-Iran war and asserted that Syria firmly opposed that war, condemned the aggression from a principled premise, and stressed that if Iran had been the party to start the aggression, Syria would not have hesitated to support Iraq. He added: Its view of the Iraqi regime notwithstanding, Syria has stressed its concern for Iraq's unity and territorial integrity throughout the Iraq-Iran war. Syria has also stressed that it is concerned for the security of the Arab countries in the Gulf and will support them against any aggression from any party out of Syria's observance of the Collective Arab Defense Pact.

The foreign minister added: This principled position of Syria was not understood by many Arab and non-Arab

governments, states, and parties until 2 August 1990 when everybody began to say that Syria was right in its position toward the Iraq-Iran war and that its leader, President Hafiz al-Asad, was more farsighted than the others. Today, Syria has been taking the same principled position since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In words and action, Syria is defending right against wrong and is supporting the one subjected to aggression against the aggressor.

The foreign minister said that the according to the Collective Arab Defense Pact, all signatory states must help any Arab country subjected to aggression. He said the Arab countries that failed to do so have broken their Arab commitment and did not respect their pan-Arab pledges. The foreign minister stressed that if all Arab countries had respected their commitments from the early days of the invasion, then the Iraqi leadership would have realized that not a single Arab country supported its mistake.

He added: What made the Iraqi leadership go further in its intransigence and haughtiness were the illusions created by certain initiatives which were not based on the texts of the Arab and international resolutions. Certain U.S. and European media organs have helped to encourage the Iraqi president to continue his intransigence and to instigate the Arabs into being dragged into a battle, which was not theirs, by a decision, which also was not theirs, in order to face troops armed with UN resolutions and international legitimacy even before they deployed the most modern military arsenals.

Al-Shar' added that through this instigation, and by taking advantage of excuses which the Iraqi regime has created, the western and Zionist circles want to turn this war into a defeat for the entire Arab nation; they will not be satisfied only with Iraq's defeat.

The foreign minister concluded his statement by stressing that Syria has tried its best to educate the Arab masses about the realities of things and spare Iraq the destruction which is awaiting it. He added: Syria has never tried to deceive the Iraqi leadership, as some others have done. Syria has always stressed that the only way for Iraq to emerge from its dilemma is the unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. Also now, in light of the proposed initiatives, Syria reiterates that the only way to stop the war is based on the unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait.

After the foreign minister finished his statement, Information Minister Muhammad Salman addressed the Assembly and said: The crucial task fulfilled by the Syrian media organs is to explain the firm principles of the Syrian policy on the pan-Arab issues and the current developments which are of concern to the whole world.

The minister added: The media must express and be committed to the political stance. Since the beginning of the crisis, the media have followed that position and explained it on both the domestic and foreign levels. In this regard, the Syrian media have explained the perils resulting from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and cautioned against the disaster to which the Iraqi regime was racing, and into which it was dragging Iraq, including its attempt to expand the scope of the war to set the whole region on fire.

The minister said: The Syrian media were clear in what they treated without any maneuvers and without any attempt at deception, because deception may lead to making mistakes and fragmenting the popular ranks, as has happened in other parts of the Arab world.

Press Commentaries on Gulf Situation

NC2002105991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Press review]

[Text] Writing under the headline "Concern for Iraq," AL-BA'TH says: Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Hashemi-Rafsanjani asserted, in a telephone conversation yesterday, their concern for Iraq and desire to end the current painful situation. The two presidents also agreed that Iraq should make the decision to withdraw from Kuwait, since this would be in everyone's interest.

This was not the first time that Syria and Iran have stated their concern for Iraqi people and land. Our leader, President Hafiz al-Asad, made a speech just a few days before the outbreak of the destructive and catastrophic war in which he called on the Iraqi president, in the name of Arab brotherliness and the Arab people, to announce withdrawal from Kuwait so as to keep the Iraqi people and land out of harm's way and spare Iraq and the region the woes of war. Nevertheless, the Iraqi regime maintained its policies and even escalated its defiance to the international community. The Iraqi regime, because of its stubbornness and intransigence, decided to stand against the will of the entire world, a matter that led to the outbreak of the catastrophic war, for whose outcome and consequences that regime is entirely to blame.

AL-BA'TH says that the policy of defiance pursued by the Iraqi regime has triggered the current course of events. The brotherly Iraqi people, who are suffering from the war, are not responsible for these destructive policies that led to so much devastation, killing, and displacement of people. The Iraqi regime has inflicted disasters on the Arab people whose future consequences are very difficult to assess. However, the ominous outcome of these disasters can be sensed somehow. This is true in the case of Israel, the historic and national enemy of the Arabs. Arab and Iraqi potentials and resources should have been directed at confronting that enemy.

AL-BA'TH concludes by saying: Anyone who takes a close look at the political line followed by the Iraqi regime since it came into power would sense the irresponsiblity of that regime, not just with the Arab people, but also with the Iraqi people, who are the helpless victims of their leadership.

Under the headline "Damascus and Pan-Arab Concern," TISHRIN says: Since the beginning of the crisis, Syria has taken a clearly defined position against the Iraqi invasion. Syria has acted in commitment to pan-Arab interests and to the principles underlying its policies—principles far removed from one-upmanship.

TISHRIN adds: Fighting as it does against Israeli occupation, Damascus has neither the pan-Arab nor ethical right to welcome Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. Syria has made many efforts to achieve Arab solidarity, mobilize Arab resources, and unify Arab ranks and views. Therefore, it cannot simply approve an action that would divide the Arabs and undermine the theoretical and practical foundations of their unity.

The blame for destroying Iraq and harming its people, says the paper, lies not only with the Iraqi regime, but also with those who applauded this regime and fueled its adventurism, self-deceit, and arrogance. The paper points out that Syria has always been concerned about Iraq; it struggled to get Baghdad on its side, and not leave it in the opposite trench. It is this concern, says the paper, that prompted Damascus to adopt a distinct position on the Iraq-Iran war, which all sides now—including Iraq—admit was a mistake. It is also this care for Iraq that drove Damascus to take a firm and decisive position against all those who covet Iraqi territory; and it is out of this same concern that Syria is now demanding that the Iraqi president leave Kuwait immediately.

TISHRIN explains that Damascus' position on the Gulf crisis headed off the full disintegration of the Arab nation, prevented the collapse of the foundations of Arab solidarity, and reduced the damage Iraq's invasion inflicted on Arab unity. Damascus' position, moreover, made it possible to talk about Arab security arrangements in the Gulf and created appropriate circumstances for Syrian-Egyptian-Saudi coordination, which has now expanded to include all Gulf Cooperation Council states. This coordination is a major pan-Arab gain. For the first time in contemporary Arab history, this coordination allows Arab power and Arab wealth to join forces for the interests of the Arabs. This great achievement must reflect positively on the entire Arab nation.

AL-THAWRAH says: Through the current futile war in the Gulf and deliberate insistence on prolonging it, Baghdad rulers continue to operate the death machine and to try to expand the circle of destruction and fire to go beyond Iraq and Kuwait to include the entire nation. They do not care for all this formidable destruction affecting Iraq's military machine and various structures. Nor do they heed the sincere calls and efforts aimed at stopping the war and sparing the people of al-Rafidayn [the Iraqis] further woes and tragedies. All this underlines one fact: The Iraqi regime is determined to proceed with the adventure and to go to the limit in the crime of slaughtering Iraq and destroying all its remaining capabilities and resources in a manner unprecedented in any nation's history. Saddam, who caused successive deep wounds to the nation and its issues, is now determined to turn his new al-Qadisiyah [the name Iraq used to describe its war with Iran] into a fully devastating crematorium.

The paper concludes: Today, just as before, Saddam is trying to use Iraq as a tool to achieve empty ambitions and false personal glories. He does not care if the entire Arab nation pays the price for it.

Afghanistan

Kabul Sees 'Favorable Opportunity' in Iraqi Offer

LD1602173991 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the following concerning the statement by the Iraq Revolutionary Command Council issued yesterday:

The continuing peace efforts launched collectively and individually by a large number of countries, including the Republic of Afghanistan, are still under way, but unfortunately have not yet reached to any clear and hopeful conclusion. On the other hand, the loss of life and destruction, with each passing day reaches intolerable levels as a result of the intensification of war in the Gulf. In the light of this complicated and difficult situation, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan assesses this statement of the Iraq Revolutionary Command Council and regards it as containing such elements which can open the door for future political and peaceful solution of the issues.

In utilizing this favorable opportunity created by this statement, we hope that further steps will be taken by all sides to end armed hostility.

Kabul Reportedly Seeking Improved Pakistan Ties

BK1802111491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1111 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Kabul, Feb 18 (AFP)—The Soviet-backed government of President Najibullah, which blames Pakistan for Afghanistan's continuing civil war, has called for improved relations with Islamabad, diplomats said Monday.

The diplomats here said Mr. Najibullah's ruling Watan (Homeland) Party last week sent feelers to Islamabad to improve bilateral relations in a marked reversal of its previous hostility towards Pakistan.

The Watan Party's powerful plenary session last week in a proposal urged Pakistan to cooperate with Afghanistan "to exploit the economic resources of the two countries for their mutual benefit," the diplomats said.

The Afghan Government offered no confirmation of the report, but the diplomats said Mr. Najibullah's chief spokesman, Sarvar Yourish, briefed Kabul's diplomatic corps on the offer Sunday.

"We have realised that no country can live in hostility with its neighbours. So we want to improve relations with Pakistan," the diplomats quoted Mr. Yourish, a senior Watan Party Central Council member, as saying.

"Instead of a policy of confrontation, we seek peaceful cooperation with Islamabad ... And we hope issues of confrontation between the two countries would be removed," Mr. Yourish reportedly told the diplomats.

The Afghan Government frequently briefs diplomats on local political and foreign policy developments.

Mr. Yourish apparently did not elaborate, but the main issue that has embittered relations between the two countries is the 12-year civil war which Kabul says is fueled by Pakistan, the mujahidin guerrillas' main backer.

Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of violating the UN-brokered Geneva accords which led to the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country. Islamabad is a signatory to the accord guaranteed by Moscow and Washington.

Afghan officials said the "new principle" aimed at peaceful co-existence with Pakistan—home to a seven-party mujahidin alliance fighting to topple Mr. Najibullah's Soviet-backed regime.

Diplomats said Kabul's overtures to Islamabad appeared to have been dictated by the detente between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the resulting new "international order."

Bangladesh

'Sick' Ershad Fails To Appear for Trial

BK1602075091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0731 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 16 (AFP)—Deposed Bangladesh President Hussain Mohammad Ershad failed to turn up for trial Saturday, with his lawyer saying he was sick, nervous and broken down.

In a 20-minute hearing, a one-man special tribunal heard from both prosecution and defence, ordered a medical board to examine Mr. Ershad's health, and adjourned proceedings to Wednesday.

Mr. Ershad, 61, arrested in December after falling from power in the face of popular unrest, faces charges of possessing unauthorized arms.

Two other cases pending involve corruption and abuse of official powers during his eight-year rule which began with a bloodless 1982 coup.

Mr. Ershad is being detained with his wife Raushan at a heavily-guarded government house less than a kilometer (half-mile) from where the trial—presided by Mohammad Habibullah, a sessions judge—is taking place.

As the tribunal began on schedule at 10:30 a.m. (0430 GMT), Defence Lawyer Kazi Shahadat Hossain said Mr. Ershad was "nervous and broken down" and suffering from an upset stomach when they met for an hour Friday.

"I found him completely broken down... I don't think he will be able to face this trial at all," Mr. Hossain said, asking for a one-week delay in proceedings.

Attorney General Aminul Haque said a prison doctor examined Mr. Ershad earlier Saturday, found symptoms of dysentry and asthma, and advised three day's rest.

The judge ordered that a three-man board—comprising professors of medicine and cadiology and a chest specialist—should examine the former president and submit a report by Monday.

Saturday's trial was to have been Mr. Ershad's first public appearance since December.

A petition by the ex-president to quash the proceedings was dismissed Thursday by a high court here. It also scrapped an earlier order staying the case for one month.

Mr. Ershad faces life imprisonment if convicted in the arms case, in which police have alleged that among items seized from the couple's official residence after their arrest were 16 weapons along with ammunition.

Eight of the weapons, which reportedly included prohibited high-calibre rifles, were allegedly unlicenced.

A conviction ahead of February 27 parliamentary elections in Bangladesh would disqualify him from running for public office and dash his hopes of contesting from detention for five constituencies in his home district of Rangpur.

Some 200 police guarded the scene of Saturday's trial, as dozens of photographers and reporters without special passes huddled with security guards outside awaiting the arrival of the former president.

Only about 20 reporters, including those of some foreign media, were given passes, valid for one month to attend and cover the trial.

Charges Brought

BK1802020291 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] The Anticorruption Bureau has submitted a charge sheet against former President Ershad for his accumulation of wealth inconsistent with his known sources of income. The bureau in its preliminary investigation found that the former president accumulated wealth of 23,155,238 taka illegally through misuse of power. The wealth include cash and gifts which were found at his official residence.

Trial Stayed

BK1802164891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1557 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 18 (AFP)—A Supreme Court judge here Monday stayed for two weeks deposed Bangladesh President Husayn Mohammad Ershad's trial on charges of possession of unauthorised arms, court officials said.

The trial, in front of a special tribunal, had already been postponed Saturday [16 February] after Mr. Ershad, 61, failed to turn up at the court and his lawyer cited health reasons for his absence.

Judge Mostafa Kamal allowed two weeks' stay in the trial process after a request from the former president's lawyer, Kazi Shahadat Hossain.

Mr. Hossain said he needed four weeks to file an appeal against a high court's dismissal Thursday of a petition by Mr. Ershad to have his trial on charges of possessing unauthorised arms quashed.

The weapons, along with other items, were allegedly recovered from the ex-president's official residence after his resignation and arrest December.

Mr. Hossain said the tribunal trial should be suspended while Mr. Ershad appealed against the high court's dismissal of his petition.

Attorney General Aminul Haque opposed the postponement, but after a brief hearing Justice Kamal granted Mr. Hossain two weeks to go ahead with the appeal, court officials said.

Attorney General Haque, who appeared for the state in the first case against Mr. Ershad, was unavailable for comment, but court sources said he might file an appeal before the same judge Tuesday for a review of the stay order.

Doctors Say Ershad Fit for Trial

BK2002053091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0459 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 20 (AFP)—Bangladesh's ousted President Hussain Mohammad Ershad is fit to stand trial, a government medical board report published here Wednesday said, after he failed to appear at an earlier hearing pleading sickness.

A three-man medical board in a report submitted to the government Tuesday said there should be no "difficulty for him to stand before the special tribunal by Wednesday."

The board was formed after Mr. Ershad failed to appear before the tribunal Saturday on charges of possessing unauthorised weapons.

At the time Mr. Ershad's lawyer said the prison doctor had confirmed the former leader was "sick, nervous and broken down," and unable to attend.

Tribunal judge Mohammad Habibullah then set the hearing for Wednesday, but because of a two-week stay granted by a Supreme Court judge Monday the trial has now been postponed and no new date has been set.

Judge Mostafa Kamal, allowed the two weeks stay after a request from Mr. Ershad's lawyer, Kazi Shahadat Hossain.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Government has commissioned the international investigative organisation, Fairfax, to help recover money reportedly stashed in foreign banks by Mr. Ershad, his family and associates.

A Fairfax team was recently in Dhaka and questioned several unidentified people, THE MORNING SUN newspaper reported here Wednesday.

Official sources confirmed that the U.S.-based company had been commissioned, but refused to give details.

Fairfax was involved in investigating the Bofors financial scandal in India.

'Massive Security' Planned for Elections

BK1902021091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0204 GMT 19 Feb 91

[By Nadeem Qadir]

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 19 (AFP)—Bangladesh braces for next week's landmark elections with plans to deploy a massive security blanket totalling 400,000 paramilitary, police and regular army personnel.

Thousands of regular army troops will be out in force despite military fears of being linked to any voting irregularities in this south asian nation long plagued by military meddling in politics.

"The number of troops could exceed 30,000, but not less," one official said. "Several thousand more will be on alert in the barracks."

Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Army Chief of Staff Lieutenant General M. Nooruddin Khan have been warned by the military high command that they accepted election duty on condition that no individual or party would hold the military responsible for any ballot irregularities, sources said.

Besides regular army troops, the presence of paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), armed police, riot police and Ansar militia will make up a total security contingent of some 400,000 personnel, officials said.

The security blanket will be enforced beginning 48 hours before the February 27 elections to the 300-seat Jatiya Sangsad, or national parliament.

About 600,000 polling officials will also be employed to conduct the elections and they will have authority to make arrests with the help of police.

Informed sources said the acting president had met with army commanders twice to persuade them of the important role they could play in maintaining law and order during the day-long voting.

Mr. Ahmed, in an address to the nation last month, said, "the army, paramilitary forces and police would be deployed in all sub-districts, in the remotest areas, to maintain peace and discipline" during the polls.

He has reiterated that since he assumed power December 6 following the ouster of President Hussain Mohammad Ershad, the "elections are bound to be free and fair if all groups followed (the code of conduct) strictly."

The code of conduct bans groups from stirring up tensions during the election campaign and calls on political parties to fully cooperate with law enforcement agencies.

The military, tarnished by links to the eight-year-rule of General Ershad, fears their image could be further damaged if they were held responsible for any voting irregularities or accused of siding with any candidate.

Army officers had warned that the military might be blamed for taking sides if polling were halted in any constituency because of law and order problems.

Authorities have now given the army guidelines for handling the law and order situation, officials said.

"The troops will not proceed to any polling centre unless or until the police and BDR fails," one source said, adding that they would be deployed in mobile units.

They said trouble-makers would first be warned by polling officials and security personnel guarding voting centres. But if they got out of hand, troops would move in and stop voting with the approval of relevant civil officials.

Gen. Khan, who has kept out of the limelight since December 6, has been busy touring military barracks briefing the troops on their polling role, according to defence sources.

But contenders in the elections, including Sheikh Hasina Wajed of the Awami League and Begum Khaleda Zia of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, have been actively wooing the military, traditionally a major power broker in Bangladesh politics.

In the country's nearly 20-year history, the army has ruled either directly or indirectly since the 1975 coup which toppled the government of Bangladesh's founding father, President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sheikh Mujib, the father of Sheikh Hasina, was killed by a small group of rebellious army officers on August 15, 1975.

But with Gen. Ershad out, political parties have pledged to make the defence forces "efficient, strong and disciplined" in accordance with Bangladesh's constitution.

Carrying of Weapons Restricted

BK1802040091 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] The government has restricted carrying of arms by [words indistinct] from 20th of this month to the 2d of next month to ensure peace and discipline during the ensuing parliamentary elections. Legal action will be

taken against those violating the restrictions. This order will not, however, be applicable to the members and officers engaged in law enforcing agencies and the security guards and employees of different government, semigovernment, private, and important establishments.

Former Prime Minister Charged in Bank Scandal

BK1902073491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0710 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 19 (AFP)—Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury faces charges in connection with a bank scandal involving some 352,000 dollars, officials said here Tuesday.

Mr. Chowhury, who served under deposed President Hussain Mohammad Ershad, is alleged to have illegally secured exemption from payment of interest on a loan from the state-run industrial bank BSB.

The bank's former head, Sikander Ali, was also implicated in the case, officials said.

Mr. Chowdhury is now head of the ousted ruling Jatiya Party and is a candidate in next week's parliamentary elections.

Bangladesh's anti-corruption bureau, in charges filed Monday, alleged that Mr. Chowdhury, his wife, and two sons, who own Pioneer Pharmacuetical Ltd. in Dhaka, used political influence to gain exemption from interest payments on the original loan of about 714,000 dollars.

Mr. Ali, who was sacked from his job immediately after the December ouster of Mr. Ershad, has been accused of illegally condoning the exemption.

Police have not indicated yet whether they intend to arrest Mr. Chowdhury, who is coordinating the campaigns of 270 ruling party candidates, before the February 27 elections.

Official Welcomes Soviet Gulf Peace Plan

BK1902155891 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Bangladesh has welcomed the current Soviet efforts to bring about a political and diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis. An official of the Foreign Ministry in Dhaka today (?described) the peace plan sent by Soviet president to Iraqi president through the foreign minister, Tariq 'Aziz, as a positive step toward the peaceful solution of the problem. Bangladesh hopes this will lead to a quick end to the war in accordance with international law and in compliance with the Security Council resolutions. He said the plan will also pave the way for a comprehensive resolution of the overall Middle East problems, including the Palestinian issue.

Iran

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Talks With Al-Asad, Ozal

NC2002051791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] The latest developments in the Persian Gulf crisis were discussed last night during a telephone conversation Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad had with our president, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani. During the conversation, the Syrian president expressed satisfaction with the persistent efforts made by the Islamic Republic of Iran and by Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani for an immediate end to the destructive war. He also expressed the hope that the efforts would be successful. Mr. Hafiz al-Asad also referred to the meeting and talks that Iraqi Foreign Minister Mr. Tariq 'Aziz had with our president and asked that he be informed of the outcome of these talks.

Our president said: Efforts should be made to put an end as quickly as possible to this destructive war, which has involved the Muslim nations of Iraq and Kuwait and has meant many losses to the wealth of the Muslims and of the region, and establish peace and security in the region. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Iraq's new stance is a ray of hope. Efforts should be aimed at not losing it. If the multinational forces perform an encouraging act, favorable results may be achieved.

President Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also held a telephone conversation with Turkish President Mr. Ozal and discussed the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to establish peace in the region. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani pointed to Iraq's announcement that it accepts Security Council Resolution 660 and to the hopes that the war will end. He stated: Comprehensive efforts should be undertaken for the materialization of Iraq's proposal and the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

Our president went on to say: We hope that before the multinational forces commence ground operations you will do your best to encourage these countries to show self-restraint so that this opportunity can be seized and Iraq can be encouraged to take practical steps.

In reply, Mr. Ozal thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its extensive efforts and said: It is a source of pleasure for me that Your Excellency is personally making unceasing efforts to end this war and I will do my best to carry out your excellency's proposal.

President Tells IRGC Nation Secure Despite War

NC2002054891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani met with officials of the offices representing the vice regency of the supreme jurisconsult in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] yesterday afternoon. He described this popular institution as one of the important elements whose efforts and devotion ensure the country's calm and security.

The president pointed to the active presence of this institution on the scene of the Islamic revolution and termed the role played by the IRGC, especially during the sacred defense, as extremely significant. He added: During the imposed war, a force came into action that was unknown to the enemy, and throughout the war the forces of this institution scored significant successes.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani noted the current situation in the region and our country's calm and security, and stressed: This calm and security—and that under the region's current conditions—is thanks to various elements; namely, obedience to the directives of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified; the existence of the esteemed leadership; the competence that the Islamic Republic has shown until now; our country's historic experience; the existence of revolutionary institutions; and the high level of the people's awareness.

The president went on to say: The fact that under the current conditions the Islamic Republic of Iran is saying what it has to say in such a way, from a revolutionary position, and so decisively, is proof of its steadfastness and good management, and of the correctness of its path, judgement, and stance.

In another part of his remarks, the president described the existence of clerical forces next to the IRGC forces as a successful experience both inside the IRGC and as far as ensuring and defending the revolution is concerned.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Continues Visit

Meets Hashemi-Rafsanjani

LD1902172591 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Republic, received Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, Pakistan's minister of foreign affairs, this afternoon. In the meeting Khan thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its efforts to establish peace in the Persian Gulf region.

He then said: From Tehran I am heading for Cairo to take part in a meeting with the participation of a number of the member states of the Islamic Conference. Undoubtedly, the efforts made by Your Excellency to set up such a conference and aimed at finding a suitable solution to halt the war have come to fruition. I hope the conference achieves good results.

He explained the viewpoint of the Pakistani Government with regard to the need for Iraq to leave Kuwait and for the foreign forces to leave the region. He then praised the role of the Islamic Repubic of Iran as a country that has rightly emerged as a suitable center for the exchange of views toward settling the crisis in the region.

Drawing attention to the sensitive role of the Islamic Republic, he expressed the hope that during the postwar era cooperation between Iran and Pakistan would further expand.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his optimism about Iraq's initial and positive move in accepting Resolution 660. He then said: The Islamic Repubic of Iran is determined to continue increasing its efforts until a suitable solution is found to put an end to this devastating war—a war that has led to the destruction of vast human and economic resources in the Islamic countries. Toward that end we thank the Government and the nation of Pakistan for their efforts.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani also expressed his hope that the Cairo meeting will bring closer the stances of the two conflicting parties in the Persian Gulf region.

Meets Karrubi

LD1902195391 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1600 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, Pakistani minister of foreign affairs, accompanied by members of his delegation, met today Mr. Karrubi, speaker of the Majles.

Referring to the common stance of Iran and Pakistan on solving the crisis in the region, the Pakistani minister of foreign affairs stressed that cooperation between his country and the Islamic Republic of Iran must continue.

Then Mr. Karrubi expressed concern over the grave conditions in the region and the dangers to the people of the region stemming from the presence of the multinational forces. He said that every opportunity to restore peace in the region and put an end to the bloodshed must be explored. Stressing the need for the departure of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, the Majles speaker referred to the illegitimate designs of the United States and some Western countries on the region, and said and that the presence of foreign forces in the region is no less dangerous for the Islamic ummah than the aggression against Kuwait.

Iraq's 'Aziz Departs for Baghdad After Talks

LD1902152691 Tehran IRNA in English 1432 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz left for Baghdad at 15:00 hours local time (11:30 hours GMT) today after an 18 hour stay in Iran on his way home from Moscow and talks with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

'Aziz briefed Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani on his talks with Soviet officials, and received the president's viewpoints in this regard.

Iran has launched intensive efforts for a peaceful end to the Persian Gulf war since its outbreak on 17 January.

'Aziz will present the Soviet peace plan as well as Iranian viewpoints to the Iraqi Command Council in Baghdad. Later on he is expected to convey to the Iranian and Soviet officials the opinions of the Iraqi Command Council.

The contents of the Soviet peace plan are not known yet, however, the French daily LE MONDE quoting informed sources has disclosed that the Soviet peace plan for the Persian Gulf should be accepted by Iraq within 36 hours, othewise it would fail.

Meanwhile, according to Soviet presidential advisor Andrey Grachev, Iraq is ready for unconditonal withdrawal from Kuwait.

Yevgeniy Primakov, special envoy of the Soviet president to Iraq, has also expressed hope that the allied forces would postpone their ground attack against Iraq to give the Soviet peace plan a chance.

The peace plan which will be reported to the Soviet parliament on Wednesday, has been reviewed by the U.S. President George Bush and his senior advisors in a two-hour session.

Commentary Assesses Gorbachev Peace Proposal

LD1902143791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1103 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In circumstances in which the propaganda machinery of the Western allies in the Persian Gulf is constantly harping on the imminent start of land attacks on Kuwait, the Soviet Union has put forward a new peace proposal for the peaceful resolution of the war and an end to the engagement.

The four-point peace proposal, which was presented by Gorbachev to Tariq 'Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, during his visit to Moscow, has drawn the attention to political observers as the last chance for peace before the start of land operations in Kuwait. It is being said that Gorbachev has asked the United States to postpone land operations against Iraq for a short while so that the chance of achieving a peaceful solution can be tested. Although U.S. officials have denied that that is the case, nevertheless, the short 24-hour period stipulated by Gorbachev for receiving a reply from Saddam Husayn may testify to the truth of that idea.

According to informed sources, Gorbachev had previously discussed his proposal with some European and American leaders to gain their support for his proposal. While everything testifies to an American desire to achieve a decisive, final military victory over Iraq, the Soviet Union continues to try to prevent that through peace efforts. Even though the United States has had the Soviet Union by its side so far, nevertheless, as the war progresses, fundamental differences between the interests of the two countries become increasingly apparent.

Any kind of decisive military victory by the multinational forces in the Persian Gulf, led by the United States, will undoubtedly be unpleasing to the Soviet Union. That country is therefore trying to replace a U.S. military victory over Iraq with a possible diplomatic-military victory, or even just a diplomatic victory. In reality, such a result would be the ideal for Soviet policy in the oil war because that country would be able to fulfill many interests in this war without the slightest expenditure.

It is being said that the proposal has four points. First, unconditional withdrawal by Iraq from Kuwait. Second, protection of the Iraqi Government and the country's territorial integrity. Third, Soviet opposition to any punitive or vengeful measures against Iraq or against Saddam Husayn. And finally, fourth, the need for talks about all other Middle Eastern issues, especially the issue of Palestine.

The proposal, which seems almost ambiguous [mobham], has apparently been presented in such a way that, while fulfilling Iraq's main demands in its initial [as heard] peace proposal, it should also include unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait as demanded by the United States. At the same time, the acceptance of such a proposal will place the Soviet Union at the center of diplomatic equations for the resolution of the issue after Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. And the initiative for the implementation of the plan and its guarantee will be in the hands of the Soviet Union.

It seems that one of the aims of the Soviet Union in presenting a new proposal is to prevent the United States from gaining total mastery over the situation in the region after the war, because if the war ends to the advantage of the United States, it will gain total mastery over half the Persian Gulf and its adjacent regions, and it will be able, with the assistance of its regional allies, to intervene and act in a unilateral manner in all Middle Eastern issues. In that case, the Soviet Union would be severely isolated and its interests would be threatened.

Another point that draws attention to Gorbachev's peace proposal is that the Soviet Union is trying, thereby, to once again draw to itself its former allies in the Arab Middle East, which had been downcast [sar khordeh shodeh budand] because of the Soviet Union's reactive posture in the Kuwaiti crisis, and to repair its tarnished image among the region's Arabs, especially because most of the Soviet Union's former allies, such as Yemen, Algeria, and Libya, are supporting Iraq.

Political observers believe that the Soviet Union cannot agree to a total U.S. military victory in the oil war because that would have a definite effect on the drawing up by the United States of the region's future security design. This occurence would be very decisive for the shape of the world's future international system in general and of the Middle East region in particular.

After the presentation of his proposal to the Iraqi foreign minister, Gorbachev set today, Tuesday, as the final

deadline for receiving Saddam Husayn's reply; that is, a 24-hour deadline beginning with the submission of the peace proposal. He has also asked for a rapid and clear reply; bearing in mind that it is being said that in the course of his meeting with Tariq 'Aziz he warned the Iraqi Government about an imminent attack by the Western allies on Kuwaiti territory. This fact may suggest that Gorbachev wants to test Iraq's seriousness about the acceptance of peace proposals.

At the moment, two opposing strategies are in play in the Persian Gulf war. One is the trend to follow the path of peace, which is now being belatedly pursued. And the other is the trend for continuing the military path which is being hastily pursued. The interests of the Soviet Union and many of the region's countries will be fulfilled through the peaceful resolution of the crisis. Whereas the United States and some of its allies are after a military victory in the oil war. In this clash of interests which has revealed itself in terms of a clash between diplomacy and war, Iraq's seriousness in accepting the peace proposal will be the determining and decisive factor which can prevent the United States from gaining mastery over the region and can prevent further killings, deaths, and destruction of the people and countries of Iraq and Kuwait.

Press Reviews Iraqi Withdrawal Proposal

LD1702124191 Tehran IRNA in English 0847 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 17, IRNA—Editorials in all the morning dailies Sunday dealt with Baghdad's announcement on Friday [15 February] to conditionally withdraw from Kuwait describing it a positive step towards settlement of the Persian Gulf crisis.

The English daily 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' referring to the Iraqi linkage of the end to Kuwaiti occupation to that of the illegal Zionist occupation of Palestine asked whether Washington and its allies will agree to the idea of linkage.

It wrote, "The U.N.'s efforts to curtail and deny Iraqi claims of a 'greater Iraq' must also hold true with Tel Aviv's claims of territorial rights to 'greater Israel'.

"If the West agree that the United Nations' sanctions and force are necessary in Kuwait, they also must concur they are equally applicable to the case of the Palestinians. Israel has no right to claim Palestinian land just as Iraq has no right to claim Kuwaiti land."

"To allow Israel to continue occupying the Palestinian territories while allied forces are killing innocent Iraqi civilians to punish Saddam Husayn for annexing Kuwait would only serve to disgrace the United Nations."

Stressing that the Palestinian issue continues to block the way towards peace in the Middle East, the paper believed "Israel has no right to expand its territory at the expense of others just as Iraq does not. The United Nations must force Israel to accept compromise," and "Iraqi troops must leave Kuwait in order to guarantee regional peace."

The other English-language daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' also believed that the Iraqi proposal "embody certain positive points which could pave the ground and set an axis for further talks on the achievement of peace."

Based on the interpretation that the raison d'etre of the United Nations is the establishment of peace and stability all over the world and not encouraging the states to continue destruction and bloodshed, the daily said "Iran since the very beginning of the bloody battle in the Persian Gulf, has employed all its potentials to put a speedy end to the conflict."

Stating that political observers in the region attach great importance to the recent trips of the Iranian foreign minister to Moscow and other diplomatic shuttles in the region, it said "The outcome of these visits and talks would possibly be the only chance for preventing a ground battle, a battle which in the opinion of military experts, would leave behind a heavy human casualty."

The Persian daily 'ABRAR' also described the Iraqi proposal as a "ray of hope" for a peaceful settlement of the Persian Gulf crisis though cooly received by the U.S. and its allies.

The paper believed that bombardment of Iraq may come to an end if Baghdad can make the United Nations review its peace proposal with optimism and at the same time prove its sincerity in abiding by the Security Council resolutions.

Iraq has to make serious efforts to gain the easily-lost confidence of the international forum, the paper said adding that the efforts by the peace-seeking countries like Iran create hope for the Iraqi nation. There is no doubt that Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait will accelerate peace-seeking efforts and make it difficult for the U.S. and its allies to justify their unbearable attacks on the Iraqi civilians and economic resources.

Finally, the Persian daily 'JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI' believed that Washington is presently prolonging the war in the region to materialize its goals of destroying the economic-military potentials of the regional Muslim countries, boosting the arms manufacturing companies and having an opportunity to test new weaponeries.

That is why Washington is openly in favor of continuing the war at any cost. But Washington's European allies adopting a milder approach towards the Persian Gulf crisis are trying on the one hand not to be blamed for following the U.S. and on the other hand to foil U.S. attempt to declare itself as the main winner of the war. They are also trying to make the U.S. understand that its prestige in the region and in the world will be further tarnished if Washington tries to further distance its position from that of Europe.

The paper, however, raised the question why Iraq has made the initiative on the conditions that the world public opinion was focused on the U.S. military attack on a bomb shelter in Baghdad.

The Baghdad regime has proved that it has no respect for the Iraqi nation, the paper stressed adding that Saddam Husayn seems to be after goals so important that he has disregarded the negative aspect of proposing the plan at this juncture.

The paper believed that the main goal of the plan is to create a rift among the U.S. allies with regards to continuation of military operations especially with respect to launching of the land offensive. The Iraqi regime is probably hopeful to convince Europe to start political maneuvers and thus existinguish flames of the war and end attacks on Iraq. Saddam through the proposal is seeking his own salvation and has placed hopes on the situation created among the U.S. allies after bombardment of the bomb shelter in Baghdad.

JOMHURI in conclusion did not rule out the possibility that the Baghdad regime suddenly overlooks its previously-announced position adopting unpredictable stands. [sentence as received]

Meshkini Elected Experts Assembly Chairman

LD2002112491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Feb 91

[Text] Ayatollah Rezvani, the chairman of the Guardians Council Central Committee, submitted a report on the performance of the committee to those attending today's session of the Leadership Assembly of Experts [Majles-e Khobregan-e Rahbari].

According to this report, on the proposal of Messrs. Kazami, Seyyed Esma'il Hashemi, Mohammadi 'Eraqi, and Asadollah Imani were elected as senior members of the presidium and placed on the special place [passage as heard] and the swearing-in ceremonies of the Assembly of Experts members by the members of the second term of the leadership Assembly of Experts took place.

Of the 74 members present, Ayatollah Meshkini was elected as chairman with 73 votes, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani was elected as first vice-chairman with 72 votes, Ayatollah Ebrahim Amini as second vice-chairman with 67 votes, and Ayatollah Taheri-Khorramabadi and Ayatollah Momen-Qomi were elected as secretaries of the second term of the assembly for two years.

Regional Security System Discussed

LD1702143791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1112 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The United States and the Soviet Union, and other Western governments have spoken many times of the necessity of establishing a new world order. Although some have judged these present crises to have been created to disturb the new world order, there is no doubt that the Persian Gulf war, more than ever, discloses the necessity for the establshment of a new security order in the crisis-stricken Middle East, and the Persian Gulf region in particular.

Some experts believe that the security plan proposed by the United States and the majority of European governments has a Middle Eastern perspective [as heard]. That is, the United States and its Western allies have realized that what has caused instability and created many crises in the Middle East is the absence of a comprehensive balance between the varying capablities of the governments of the region. Therefore, to establish comprehensive stability and security, a political, economic, and security balance should be created.

Even though the details of the U.S. plan pertaining to the region's security have not been disclosed, or perhaps have not even been put forward, it is possible to surmise that, regarding political balance, despite all their differences of opinion, America and its Western allies are trying to find a solution to two basic issues which they think cause instability. First, the Palestinian crisis, and then the important issue of Islamic fundamentalism.

But regarding military balance, efforts are most likely to be concentrated on forcing the regional states to halt the development of mass destruction weapons, such as chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, on the basis of joint agreements such as the Helsinki Accord or the CSCE, and, furthermore, to bring the proliferation of conventional weapons under certain limits. And finally, regarding economic issues, the deep chasm between rich and poor governments should be removed and so-called fair distribution of wealth should be achieved.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was the first to call for the implementation of a new Marshall Plan for the Middle East. In general, apart from the Arab governments in the region and the Israeli regime, in the opinion of the Americans, the governments of Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran should also participate in this plan to make it a comprehensive one.

It seems that, apart from this comprehensive and Middle Eastern plan [as heard], another plan exists which deals in particular with the Persian Gulf and contains, of course, no terms contradicting the first plan. In the plan for the Persian Gulf, efforts would be made to create the same three types of balance, political, military and economic, but the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman—would pay for the plan, and Egypt and Syria would contribute their military power.

In the opinion of some regional analysts, those eight countries are trying to make the new regional security a completely Arab plan and, when appropriate, other countries of the region will also be invited to provide some form of cooperation.

Despite this, it is clear that the act of putting forward such plans in no way guarantees their success, and that there are numerous obstacles in the way of their implementation. First, the hegemonism of the Zionist regime and its strategic alliance with the United States is, in itself, a major factor in the regional crises. Furthermore, determining the fate of Iraq's rulers and its future military strength is considered a significant factor in any security plan.

For some time, and particularly in the pre-war period, Iran has sought a joint security system in the Persian Gulf region, provided that foreign forces have no influence or involvement in it and that, in addition, priority is given to the Persian Gulf littoral states in the regional plan. No doubt, if Iran's role in military economic, and political affairs of the region is ignored, it would mean that any such plan or solution would be still-born.

Oil, Smoke, 'Greasy Rain' Said Polluting Area

LD1902205691 Tehran IRNA in English 1746 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 19, IRNA—Leakage from oil wells set afire by the warring sides in the Persian Gulf has had adverse effects on environment and marine life in the region.

From Borazjan near the Persian Gulf port-city of Bushehr they were reports of food poisoning as a result of people eating fish recently caught in Persian Gulf waters. Many complained that the fish smelt of oil. In related reports reaching here from Bandar-e Lengeh near the Strait of Hormuz further east, a cloud of thick smoke has blanketed the coastal town and that the smoke is moving to other areas in southern Iran. [as received] Meanwhile many places in western Iran bordering Iraq, particularly the town of Qasr-e Shirin are threatened by air pollution as a result of the non-stop U.S.-led bombardment of Iraqi oil installations across the border. Black greasy rains have fallen in some towns since the start of the Persian Gulf war between Iraq and the U.S.-led forces on January 17.

Pakistan

Prime Minister, Soviet Envoy Discuss Gulf

BK1802035891 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Soviet Ambassador Viktor P. Yakunin called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Islamabad yesterday. They exchanged views on a number of global and regional issues, especially the Gulf war and the ongoing diplomatic initiatives to end it. Matters relating to further promotion of bilateral relations were also discussed.

Y.K. Sharipov, the leader of the visiting Soviet parliamentary delegation, has said that his delegation held detailed and frank discussions with Pakistani leaders on various aspects of Pakistan-Soviet relations, development of cooperation between parliaments of both countries, and a number of international issues. Addressing a news conference in Karachi yesterday, he said the Soviet Union is doing everything possible to bring an end to the Gulf war and the Pakistani leadership, too, is doing its best to achieve this objective.

On Afghanistan, Sharipov said it is a matter of satisfaction for him to know that both Pakistan and the Soviet Union agree that the Afghan conflict cannot be resolved militarily. He added that during his meetings with the Pakistani authorities, matters relating to the Soviet soldiers taken prisoner during the Afghanistan war were also discussed. He described this as an excruciating issue for the Soviet society and said Pakistan can play an important role in helping to resolve this problem.

Federal Cabinet Meeting on Gulf Crisis Reported

BK1702162391 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 17 Feb 91

[Excerpts] The federal Cabinet meeting in Islamabad today discussed at length the latest situation in the Gulf, following Iraq's statement. [passage omitted] The Cabinet was briefed by the prime minister and six federal ministers who visited various Muslim countries on their talks with heads of state and government on the Gulf conflict. It was informed that all the leaders of these countries have supported Pakistan's prime minister's peace formula.

Briefing newsmen after the Cabinet meeting, the adviser on information and broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, said the Cabinet was of the view that the latest Iraqi offer of cease-fire is encouraging and a ray of hope for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf conflict. There was an apparent change in President Saddam Husayn's policy. He said Mr. Nawaz Sharif would visit the People's Republic of China from the 26th of this month in continuation of his peace mission. China is a close and trusted friend of Pakistan and the two countries reguarly exchange views on important international issues.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said the government is considering to convene a joint session of Parliament after the prime minister's visit to China to discuss the Gulf situaiton.

Replying to a question, he said Pakistan's stand on the Gulf conflict has been consistent and time will prove that the government had demonstrated deep insight into this problem.

The adviser on information and broadcasting pointed out that the strike call given by the opposition on 10 February proved a total failure. This shows that the people accept the government's policy on the Gulf crisis which has been increasingly appreciated abroad as well.

Officials Comment on Iraqi Withdrawal Proposal

BK1602031691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Commenting on Iraq's Revolution Command Council statement, a Foreign Office spokesman said last night in Islamabad that Pakistan considers the Iraqi proposal to accept the UN Security Council Resolution 660 to be an encouraging start that has created hopes for a peaceful solution to the Gulf war. He said that the relevant UN Security Council resolution demands immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. The spokesman said the prime minister who has returned home after his second phase of his peace mission, had detailed discussions with the leaders of Muslim countries for an immediate and peaceful solution to the crisis so as to prevent the bloodshed and devastation caused by the Gulf war.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, the prime minister's adviser on information and broadcasting, has said the shift in the Iraqi stand for the troop withdrawal from Kuwait reflects the efforts of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for the restoration of peace in the region. He said in Islamabad last night that Nawaz Sharif is the only leader of any Muslim country who visited several Muslim countries and almost all of them supported his peace mission. He said the elected government respects the aspirations of the people and will fulfill their expectations in all domestic and foreign affairs.

Offer Called 'Encouraging'

BK1802112891 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Text] Pakistan has been playing a truly historic role in bringing about peace in the Gulf and halting the war. This was stated by the prime minister's adviser on information and broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, while talking to newsmen at the Karachi airport this afternoon. He described the latest Iraqi offer of cease-fire [as heard] as encouraging and a ray of hope for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The adviser referred to the visit of the prime minister and six federal ministers to various Muslim countries and said that leaders of all the countries visited have supported Pakistan's peace efforts.

Answering a question, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said that both Radio Pakistan and PTV [Pakistan Television] were providing objective coverage of the Gulf war. To ensure more objective and comprehensive coverage, he said, the government has decided to send Radio Pakistan and television correspondents to the Gulf for war reporting.

'Religious Party' Holds Anti-Saddam Rally

BK1602134691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1248 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Lahore, Pakistan, Feb 16 (AFP)—A religious party held an unprecedented demonstration here against President Saddam Husayn as a reply to Iraqi sympathisers in Pakistan, witnesses said Saturday.

Workers of the fundamentalist Mutihadda Jamiat Ahle Hadith (MJAH) condemned the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait at a rally here Friday, calling Mr. Husayn a "Soviet puppet" and "usurper."

The protest coincided with prayers held throughout the country for the victims of Wednesday's attack on a Baghdad air raid shelter, described by the U.S. as a military command bunker.

Reports said some youths brandishing shoes, a gesture of contempt, tried to attack a bus in which MJAH members were returning from the rally.

Speaking at the rally, leaders of MJAH, a pro-Saudi organization, said the Iraqi leader had dragged the Gulf region into a holocaust, violating Islamic morality and international principles.

"No one can become an Islamic hero by firing some missiles on Israel," Maulana Moinuddin Lakhvai, a member of the National Assembly, told the rally.

He said the Iraqi president was solely responsible for the death and destruction in the Moslem world.

The organization had scheduled another anti-Saddam demonstration here for late Saturday while a multi-party forum said it will start a programme of daily pro-Iraq demonstrations in the country from February 20.

Later, a group of Iraqi sympathisers stoned buses carrying MJAH members from a meeting they held here late Saturday, witnesses said.

The group, which alleged that the rally was backed by the local administration, set fire to a government transport bus, they said.

No injuries were reported, but some buses were damaged.

Saudi Arabia Offers Free Oil for Three Months

BK1902100191 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 19 Feb 91 pp 1, 6

[By Ashraf Hashmi]

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 18—Saudi Arabia has offered Pakistan 50,000 barrels of Arab light crude oil, daily free of cost for a period of three months starting from Jan. 1, it was officially learnt here on Monday.

The Saudi offer, covering a total quantity of about 4.5 million barrels worth about 100 million dollars, has apparently been extended in recognition of the heavy economic strains Pakistan is facing due to the war in the Gulf.

The formal intimation received from Riyadh last week stated that the entire quantity of 50,000 barrels Pakistan

has been importing from Saudi Arabia each day would now be available to it at no cost basis for a period of three months. The deal would be applicable from Jan. 1.

This is the first relief Pakistan has received from its Arab friends since the outbreak of the Gulf war due to which Islamabad had suffered accumulative losses to the tune of 1.5 billion dollars.

Turkey was the first country, which immediately after the Allied forces' attack on Iraq, was assured of a free oil supply worth of 1.5 billion dollars by Saudi Arabia.

Official sources when approached said the supplies from Saudi Arabia have become normal after a temporary break for a very short duration when due to the intensity of the Gulf war no carrier was available for the shipment of the oil.

They said a ship carrying about 487,500 barrels has already arrived at Karachi and the tanker was being unloaded. Pakistan, they said, was only paying the cargo charges.

Meanwhile sources in the Finance Ministry have denied reports that Pakistan has received a grant of 100 million dollars from Saudi Arabia and 50 million dollars from the UAE [United Arab Emirates]. The said they have no knowledge of such cash grants.

The Saudi offer of a free flow of oil for three months period, they said would help Pakistan to ease its balance of payment position. The decline in the international oil prices they said, has also come as a big relief to the country which had suffered heavy loss from August to December when oil prices shot up to 27 dollars per barrel and the prices of the finished product also registered a steep rise. This, they said, had adversely affected the balance of payment position and the situation became worse with the suspension of the American assistance and IMF cash support. The country, they said, had survived the worst crisis and the situation was now gradually improving.

Bhutto Charges Police 'Tortured' Party Members

BK2002021291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1736 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Karachi, Feb 19 (AFP)—Pakistan's leading opposition leader Benazir Bhutto charged Tuesday that her party officials were tortured in jails as police arrested three more deputies on terrorism charges.

In a pre-dawn raid police arrested three deputies of southern Sindh's provincial assembly, lifting the number of her Pakistan People's Party (PPP) members jailed since last week to 10, party sources said.

Officials said the deputies were detained on charges of complicity in acts of terrorism in the ethnically troubled southern province.

The cases had been "fabricated" to "prevent us from exercising the right to represent people in the assemblies," the former premier said, adding that it was also a bid to deny party participation in the senate elections scheduled this month. Senators are elected by provincial mps [members of parliament].

Ms. Bhutto told reporters many of her activists were "tortured" by police seeking to extricate confessions and "to implicate my family and the party in false cases." She demanded an enquiry by the superior court into the allegations of police torture and urged the chief election commissioner to investigate the "arrests and kidnapping" of her party deputies before the elections.

The PPP activists and parliamentarians are also being held for their alleged involvement in the August 22 firing on camps set up in Karachi by the ethnic Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) to welcome its leader Altaf Hussain home after kidney treatment in London. Some 22 people were killed in the incident.

In a letter sent to human rights organisations here and abroad, the party's Karachi Chief Iqbal Haider said more than 1,000 people had been arrested since Ms. Bhutto's ouster on August 6.

The Sindh government maintains weapons were distributed at the house of her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, to those arrested in the August 22 killings.

An arrest warrant has also been issued for Sindh's former Chief Minister Syed Qaim Qali Shah, who has sought court protection for 15 days.

Khan's Participation in Cairo Meeting Criticized

BK1902095291 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 19 Feb 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Wrong Kind of Round Table"]

[Text] It has been officially announced that after his talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati in Tehran, our Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan will make a dash to Cairo to participate in the foreign ministers conference in the Egyptian capital. Quite frankly we must make a clean breast of our total ignorance what that proposed Cairo show is in aid of. And what passes comprehension even more comprehensively is what our foreign minister would be doing there, save the dubious pleasure of a trip to the land of the Sphinx. The foreign ministers likely to show up at President Husni Mubarak's table would, in all probability, be the ones habitually to be found in the train of Washington. And where you have the shadow of Washington hovering overhead, Washington's clients have precious little to do except to provide the numbers. We should have thought that our foreign minister would prefer to stay away from a company where, if he is carrying the proper brief, he would be signally out of place. Far from being impervious to the fact that there is generally something to be gained by showing Pakistan's flag at as many places as possible. Even so, there would

always be places, situations and occasions where Pakistan would be much better off by its non-appearance. The Cairo conclave is patently one such event.

What does one expect from Cairo? It is predictable enough. The gentlemen expected to gather there on February 20 will, for a preface, curse Baghdad and demand its instant and unconditional withdrawal. We have already done so, time and again. Any repetition of the same would be an inane tautology, better avoided. Besides that, it is hard to see what the foreign ministers collecting in Cairo would be able or inclined to contribute. Having played such a painstakingly positive role in paving the way towards cessation of hostilities and return of peace and justice in the Gulf, Pakistan would appear to be compromising itself by being in the Cairo company. To be honest, the Cairo meeting would have been better sited were it to be held in some safe nook of the Department of State or the Pentagon in Washington. Forgive the cynic who might add, "why not in Tel Aviv." Jokes apart, Pakistan ought to stay away from Cairo, if for no other reason, as a precaution against the Camp David contagion.

Commentary Critical of West's Nuclear Policy

BK1802115791 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 18 Feb 91 p 4

[Article by Brigadier (Retired) S.A.I. Tirmazi entitled: "Sabotaging Pakistan's Nuclear Energy]

[Text] Notwithstanding the fact that nuclear power plants are quite different to nuclear weapons and the manufacture of nuclear bombs from reactor grade plutonium is almost impossible, developed countries have shown little understanding of Third World energy requirements and linked the transfer of technology to nuclear proliferation restrictions. International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation (INFCE) in their final communique stated, "Nuclear energy is expected to increase its role in meeting the world's energy needs and can, and should be widely available to that end; that effective measures can, and should be taken to meet the specific needs of developing countries in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and that effective means can, and should be taken to minimise the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons without jeopardising energy supplies or the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Why Pakistan's quest for harnessing nuclear energy has suffered serious set-backs can only be explained by those who are at the helm of affairs.

In the mid-50s, USA launched "atoms for peace programme" for sharing the benefits of peaceful use of nuclear energy and Mr Munir Ahmed Khan the PAEC [Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission] Chairman, went to North Carolina State College, Raleigh, USA, for training. After completing the training he decided not to come back to Pakistan till December 1971, when ZAB [Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto], brought him back to Pakistan and made him chairman, PAEC.

Scientists connected with KANUPP [Karachi Nuclear Power Plant] are of the view that Dr Usmani his predecessor, had almost completed the project by starting it in 1966. The civil works were completed in 1969 and trial electricity generation started during 1971 though formally the plant was inaugurated in Dec. 1972 with Mr Munir as Chairman PAEC.

Uptil now PAEC has neither formulated any nuclear energy policy nor Nuclear Power Plant policy. Pakistan had first 5MWe. Pakistan Research Reactor (PARR) in 1965 and since then no progress had been made till 1989 when 28MWe 'Toy Reactor' was purchased from China. It is not understood why CANDU [natural uranium-based reactor] type NPP [Nuclear Power Plant] was not duplicated? When our scientists have the ability and technical know-how! Is it sabotage or inefficiency or deliberate negligence? It may be mentioned that KANUPP is a 125 MWe power plant but due to it's age and safety factor only 95 MWe electricity is being generated. It is creditable that in spite of the Canadian embargo on the fuel—heavy water and spares—since 1974, Pakistani engineers are running it efficiently and safely. They have developed indigenous capability to manufacture maintenance, spares and fuel fabrication. If directed and led, they could have easily duplicated it.

Even Technical Advisory Council which is headed by the Prime Minister and meets once a year to review the policy had also recommended duplication but still not implemented for reasons best known to PAEC authorities. In 1974 PAKNUR [Pakistan Nuclear Reactor] Canada was proposed but shot down by PAEC Chairman. In 1976, approval was given for a 600 MWe power plant at Chashma which again fell through due to domestic politics and faulty planning.

Mr. ZAB had gone on a tangent as on Jan 2, 1972 he declared in the Multan conference that Pakistan will have an atom bomb within two years. Who could have put such an idea in the head of a prime minister should not be too difficult, to guess some effort also said to have been made to pursue the plutonium route, obviously, without any success. It may be mentioned that plutonium 240, 242 is considered 'ugly'. It is 'ugly' to fabricate and 'ugly' to use as it has high fission rate setting dangerous chain reaction. Any activity or planning to get plutonium by nuclear fuel cycle will be a waste of time and effort.

Who pulled the bluff by trying to obtain a Nuclear Reprocessing Plant [NRP] is still a mystery and haunting Pakistan's nuclear energy efforts? A country has to have a large amount of spent uranium to reprocess it. Our scientists give zero value to the spent fuel of KANUPP. It is just kept there. Still 'somebody' wanted to purchase a NRP. Why? Who?

In other policy parameters of PAEC, extraordinary and wasteful efforts have been directed towards mining and exploration of uranium. Incidently, uranium happens to be dirt cheap and available off-the-shelf in the world.

Due to lack of job satisfaction, and faulty policies of PAEC a number of brilliant scientists have reportedly left Pakistan to seek employment in foreign countries; a dangerous brain drain which must be checked.

As for the development of nuclear deterrent, chairman PAEC Mr. Munir Ahmad Khan had following to say, "Nuclear proliferation is basically a political problem. The reasons for the proliferation of weapons, including nuclear, are linked with perceptions of security needs and national interests. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by a developing country would not enhance their security. Instead, it would expose them to threats of a direct nuclear attack by others, against which they would have no viable defence. And should a developing country decide to acquire nuclear weapons, it would inevitably put an almost unbearable economic burden on that country and cause serious social and political problems which its own borders, where generally a large segment of the population is deprived of even basic necessities of life. [sentence as received] If developing countries want to retain the so-called nuclear option, it is basically a political reason either as a reaction to the discriminatory nature of attitude of NWS [expansion unknown] as formalized in NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty]" (The Nation—18 September 87).

PAEC will be well advised to follow a dual policy; importation and parallel development of indigenous technology. Now that Pakistan is importing 300 MWe NPP from China and 900 MWe NPP from France which are likely to be operative by 1996-97, PAEC must pursue plans for the indigenous development of 600 or 300 MWe NPP and nuclear Reactor Technology in collaboration with other Nuclear powers and Third World countries as if one country can do it independently or can be self-sufficient in all components of nuclear power technology. The national goals and aspirations can only be achieved if PAEC is headed by a sincere, committed, honest, competent and a dynamic Chairman.

Sri Lanka

Three Coalition Nations Allowed To Refuel

BK1602130191 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 16 Feb 91

[Text] Sri Lanka is to permit three nations of the multinational force involved in the Gulf war to avail refueling facilities in Colombo from next week. But the countries have not been specified so far. Our Colombo correspondent quoting official sources said the decision by the Cabinet subcommittee follows a request by the United States and its allies.

LTTE Kills 44 Soldiers in Ambush

BK1802060891 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0540 GMT 18 Feb 91

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Feb 18 (LANKAPUVATH)—Forty four soldiers returning to camp after a night operation were ambushed at 0730 hours (local time) yesterday, and killed by a force of about 400 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorist gunmen as they were passing through the village of Kokkupaduwan near the town of Kondaichchi in the northwestern Mannar District. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the terrorists had set off landmines and opened fire with machine guns and automatic rifles as the soldiers were marching along a track flanked by rice fields overgrown by dense shrubs, when they were attacked. The official sources said the soldiers though taken by surprise had counterattacked having called in air support. A number of terrorists were killed in the ensuing exchange of fire which lasted 20 minutes. The bodies of five terrorists were found later at the scene of the battle.

Meanwhile, three terrorists were killed in a encounter with security forces at Thrikonamadu, close to the Polonnaruwa border of the Batticaloa District. Another terrorist was killed at Kankesanthurai. Special task force commandos captured a .50 heavy gun, ammunition and camouflage uniforms in a raid on an LTTE hideout at Thatapalam.

Media Comments on 'Massacre'

BK1902051491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0440 GMT 19 Feb 91

[Text] Colombo, Feb 19 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan media Tuesday called on military commanders to minimise their casualties after Tamil guerrillas wiped out two platoons of soldiers in the island's northwest.

The state run DAILY NEWS said commanders should ensure that setbacks are minimised although reverses and successes were part of war. "Otherwise there can be no victory," the daily said in an editorial.

"The concerned authorities will, as they must, find out what went wrong," the paper said.

The dominant rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Sunday killed at least 45 security personnel and lost five of their own men in an ambush in Mannar District, according to an official account.

"Yesterday's news that over 40 soldiers had been killed in Mannar focuses stark attention on our own tragedy," the paper said. It had warned earlier that the weight of the gulf war coverage was drowning Sri Lanka's dragging civil war.

Newspapers here also called on both the LTTE and the government not to abandon a search for a negotiated settlement to the island's ethnic conflict which has left thousands dead since it flared up in mid-1983.

"A quick end to the fighting is the most desirable objective," the DAILY NEWS said, echoing similar sentiments expressed by other dailies here.

Military officials here had said that security forces backed by aerial cover were continuing a search Monday for the attackers who took part in the ambush, but details of the operation were unavailable early Tuesday.

There has been no reaction so far from the LTTE to their latest massacre of soldiers in the coastal Mannar district, where security forces had earlier made inroads into Tiger-held territory.

Troops were returning after an unsuccessful wait for LTTE men in the region late Saturday when they themselves were ambushed Sunday in an abandoned rice field.

The LTTE and government forces have been locked in combat since secret talks between them ended in failure in June with the militants resuming their separatist campaign for the island's two million Tamil minority.

Since then, more than 5,550 people, including some 1,400 security personnel, have died in bitter fighting in the northeast where Tamils are concentrated.

Government Inflicts Heavy Casualties on LTTE

BK1902114691 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1107 GMT 19 Feb 91

["Oana/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 19 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—Government troops hit hard at LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province district of Batticaloa, capturing and destroying three terrorist bases, causing heavy terrorist casualties and seizing a large quantity of weapons.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that security forces captured and later destroyed three LTTE bases at Kalyanamadu and Univil. Arms, ammunition, anti-personal mines and urea were seized. The sources said there were many LTTE casualties, when a group of terrorists were wiped out at Eravur. Four terrorists were killed by government troops at Kadirvelu, where an LTTE observation post was destroyed. Twenty eight anti-personnel mines were recovered at Kovilporatu in Kalawanchikudy.

Tamil Civilians Defy LTTE in Vavuniya Area

BK2002103891 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0932 GMT 20 Feb 91

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Feb 20 (LANKAPUVATH)—Hundreds of Tamils from Jaffna, trekking southwards to escape the claws of the Tigers and tired of waiting long hours for LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] clearance attacked and broke through the barrier set up by the terrorists at Nochchimodai in Vavuniya this morning official sources told LANKAPUVATH. The LTTE terrorists at the barrier extorted a toll ranging from Rs. [rupees] 1000 to Rs. 5000 from long queues of Tamils wanting to enter Vavuniya Town which is under government control to seek refuge in government run camps or to move further south, many to Colombo.

Earlier, government troops had smashed the LTTE barrier at Thandikulam, hence the setting up of new terrorist barrier at Nochchimodai. The sources said this was the first time that Tamil civilians in the north openly defied the LTTE.

Meanwhile, two LTTE cadres trying to penetrate the forward defences of the Palali military base were killed by government troops, Tuesday. Security forces also recovered a 25 kilogram landmine and 13 rifle grenades at Vellali in Batticaloa. Three soldiers were killed when defusing a landmine. The tragedy occurred at Mullaitivu.